Da’wah of Global Islamic Resistance

Shaykh
Umar Abd al-akim (Abu Mu‘ab as-Suri)

Volume 6: Trajectory and Experiences of the Current Jihād

Translated by
Abd ar-Rahmān al-Mansur

﴿ فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ لا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ وَحَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

مؤسسة النازعات
Anaziat

ذو الحجة
١٤٤٦هـ



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Annaziat

Dhuʿl-Hijjah 1446

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillāhi r-Raḥmāni r-Raḥīm

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ، وَبَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، فِي الْعَالَمِينَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammadin wa ʿalā āli Muḥammadin, kamā ṣallayta ʿalā Ibrāhīma wa ʿalā āli Ibrāhīma, innaka ḥamīdun majīd. Allāhumma bārik ʿalā Muḥammadin wa ʿalā āli Muḥammadin, kamā bārakta ʿalā Ibrāhīma wa ʿalā āli Ibrāhīma, innaka ḥamīdun majīd

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The Trajectory and Experiences of the Jihādī Current (1960 - 2001 CE)

Allāh the Exalted said:
{And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allāh is with the doers of good.} (Qurʾān, Al-ʿAnkabūt: 69)

The Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) said:
"Islām began as something strange and will return to being strange as it began, so glad tidings to the strangers."

He (peace and blessings be upon him) also said:
"A group of my Ummah will continue to fight for the truth, remaining dominant over those who oppose them, until the last of them fights the Antichrist (al-Masīḥ al-Dajjāl)."

And he (peace and blessings be upon him) informed about their steadfastness, saying:
"A group of my Ummah will continue to be manifest upon the truth, unharmed by those who oppose them, until the command of Allāh comes while they are dominant over the people."

First: Definition and Classification of the Jihādī Current

To begin with, the generally agreed-upon principle, as a general definition, states that Jihād in the path of Allāh is the effort expended to make the word of Allāh supreme. In its broadest sense, it signifies fighting in the path of Allāh and sacrificing one's life and wealth for the sake of upholding Allāh's religion and defending Muslims: their religion, blood, honor, wealth, and land. Accordingly, one who undertakes this action seeking the pleasure of Allāh and for His word to be

supreme is a mujāhid in the path of Allāh. If a group or community of Muslims unites for this purpose, they are mujāhidīn in the path of Allāh.

However, this chapter pertains to a specific type of these mujāhidīn, whose adherents require a specific term and definition that encompasses them and applies to their various schools of thought, gatherings, or even their scholars, cadres, and individuals. This is what has come to be termed the "Jihādī current." In previous lectures and recordings, particularly in the lecture series titled "Jihād is the Solution: Why and How," as well as in video lectures which were among my latest productions and bore the title of this book, I had broadened the scope of this term when I reached this chapter. I stated therein that the Jihādī current "is a comprehensive term for any individual, group, or organization that bears arms to wage Jihād against the enemies of Islām under the banner of 'There is no god but Allāh, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh.'" At that time, I noted that this definition sets aside the issue of specific methodologies, means, and limited objectives, and bypasses their evaluation. I also said that the Jihādī current is a phase and a phenomenon that emerged from the Islāmic awakening during the past century.

Upon reviewing what I had written or said in my lessons under this expanded definition, I found that the Jihādī current whose trajectory I discussed in those lectures—and which I address here—does not apply to everyone who falls under that broad definition, which includes every mujāhid in the path of Allāh. This broader category, constituting the sum of their groups and individuals, can be termed the "armed Jihādī phenomenon." Therefore, I will rephrase the definition more precisely here:

The Jihādī Current:

It encompasses organizations, groups, gatherings, scholars, thinkers, prominent figures, and individuals who have adopted the concept of armed Jihād against the

existing governments in Arab and Islāmic countries, considering them apostate ruling systems. This is due to their ruling by other than what Allāh has revealed, legislating without Allāh's authority, and their allegiance to the enemies of the Muslim nation (Ummah) from various disbelieving powers. They have also adopted the methodology of armed Jihād against colonial powers attacking Muslim lands, regarding those regimes—whose legitimacy they have nullified and against whom they have rebelled—as allies at war with Islām and Muslims.

Although groups and individuals of the Jihādī current share with other components of the Jihādī phenomenon the principle of armed Jihād against external aggressors attacking the people of Islām, their lands, and their sanctities—alongside groups and individuals who have undertaken Jihād against these enemies in places like Palestine, Chechnya, Bosnia, Kashmir, the Philippines, Eritrea, and elsewhere—they are distinguished by an ideology rooted in the principles of Divine Sovereignty (Ḥākimiyyah) and separation from the systems of ignorance (Jāhiliyyah), by the principles of loyalty and disavowal (al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ), and the believers' stance against false deities (ṭāghūt) and their allies, among other methodological details that we will discuss.

Therefore, I will term the second group, those who practice Jihād against original disbelievers—Jews, Christians, polytheists, and other enemies of Muslims—as "Mujāhid Groups." These are terms for academic classification and categorization, not a doctrinal division or an evaluative methodology.

The foundational doctrinal principle, as previously stated, is that a mujāhid in the path of Allāh is one who fights for the word of Allāh to be supreme. This was established by the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) in authentic and well-known Ḥadīth of the Sunnah: Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī narrated that a Bedouin man came to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, one man fights for spoils, another fights to be mentioned, and

another fights for his position to be seen. Who is in the path of Allāh?" The Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) replied: *"Whoever fights so that the word of Allāh is supreme is in the path of Allāh."* (Narrated by Muslim).

Throughout this research, I may use the term "Jihādīs" in short to refer to those belonging to the Jihādī current—and this term has become well-known—and "mujāhidīn" to refer to individuals of the other category. It should also be kept in mind that this classification is based on the general majority. The Jihādī current may include individuals who do not fully subscribe to its detailed ideology and methodology, although this is rare. Conversely, individuals within mujāhid groups fighting original disbelievers—colonizers and external enemies—may adhere to the ideology of the Jihādī current, and this is common. This is particularly true for mujāhid groups that originated from the Muslim Brotherhood or Salafī current groups. However, the focus of these groups was on external enemies, and they did not adopt an overt methodology in this regard, mostly for operational and political reasons, or sometimes for methodological ones.

Therefore, after this detailed explanation, I return to summarize the definition: Jihādīs or the Jihādī current are the groups or individuals who espouse the idea of armed Jihād against existing governments in the Islāmic world or against external enemies, and adhere to a specific ideology based on the principles of Divine Sovereignty, the rules of loyalty and disavowal, and the fundamentals of contemporary Jihādī politico-legal thought, as detailed and known in their literature.

If we wish to classify the groups and individuals who practiced armed Jihād during the second half of the twentieth century up to the present day—who mostly constitute what is termed the "armed Jihādī phenomenon"—to gain a more specific understanding of the substance of the preceding definition, we find that two types of classification are possible:

First: according to their fields of Jihād and the enemy they targeted.
Second: according to their methodologies of thought, belief, and politico-legal approach.

However, before that, it is necessary to draw attention to the important distinction between mujāhid or Jihādī groups, and those organizations that bear arms against various forms of the Ummah's enemies, but not as Jihād in the path of Allāh, not to make the word of Allāh supreme, nor as the performance of the obligation of Jihād with the intention of religious duty as an act of worship. Rather, their motives are different, perhaps for national liberation, or for political reasons against dictatorial governments, to change the existing non-religious system and establish another non-religious system based on principles of nationalism, patriotism, democracy, socialism, communism, or other contemporary secular political and intellectual doctrines.

These latter are resistance or militant organizations, not mujāhid or Jihādī ones. Bearing arms may be for reasons of manliness, zeal, courage, ostentation, or vainglory, and so forth. Their actions, though perhaps commendable from a national, liberationist, or resistance perspective, are not considered an act of worship for which the perpetrator is rewarded, nor will they have recompense in the Hereafter. Their death is not martyrdom in the path of Allāh; rather, their emigration and death are according to their intention. Indeed, they may be sinful or even apostate depending on the objectives for which they fought. For Jihād is that which is in the path of Allāh and to make His word supreme. And the martyr (shahīd), as defined by the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him), is one who fights so that the word of Allāh is supreme; he is in the path of Allāh.

As for the mujāhidīn who constitute the individuals of the Jihādī phenomenon, they are those who fight in the path of Allāh as an act of devotion to Him and in fulfillment of an obligation He has enjoined upon Muslims in specific circumstances.

They undertake Jihād as a religious, devotional act. This must be clear. The classification of the types of mujāhidīn today, based on what has been mentioned, is as follows. This will help define the Jihādī current and distinguish it from other components of the "contemporary armed Jihādī phenomenon" in general.

Second: Classification of the Components of the Jihādī Phenomenon

Classification of the Components of the Jihādī Phenomenon According to Their Fields of Jihād and the Enemies They Fought:

1. **The Jihādī Current (or Jihādī Groups/Organizations, or Jihādīs):**
   These are the groups and individuals who have adopted the idea of Jihād against the apostate, tyrannical governments in Arab and Islāmic countries, in order to overthrow them and establish the rule of Allāh's Sharīʿah upon their ruins, or to repel their oppression against Muslims, based on a specific Jihādī politico-legal ideology that will be explained, Allāh willing.
   Members of these organizations and groups may participate, collectively or individually, in other types of Jihād, such as repelling an aggressor and Jihād against external enemies, as in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, and elsewhere. However, the basis of their formation and their objectives generally make them organizations that are secretive in movement, national (or country-specific) in objectives, and hierarchical in organizational structure. Its members are bound to a leadership and a commander (amīr) through an oath of allegiance (bayʿah) for Jihād and to work towards achieving these goals.

2. **Mujāhid Groups or Organizations:**
   These are organizations and groups that specialize in Jihād against aggressing enemies in Muslim lands, especially Jews (as in Palestine), occupying Crusaders like the Americans (as in the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, and

elsewhere currently), Westerners in general, atheists like the Russians or Chinese, or polytheists as in Chechnya, Bosnia, India, Kashmir, and Southeast Asia, or any type of external enemy.

Often, these organizations take the form of national liberation movements, but on an Islāmic and Jihādī basis, as mentioned earlier, with the aim of liberating those lands and then subjecting them to Islāmic rule, or in defense of religion, land, honor, life, and property, as an act of worship and a religious obligation.

3. **Mujāhid Groups and Individuals Acting to Change Wrongdoing with Arms or to Repel Injustice:**

This phenomenon is mostly based on individual Jihād and personal initiatives. Often, they lack defined groups or a commander (amīr); rather, they are individuals or small, scattered elements who undertake armed Jihādī actions with the intention of seeking reward from Allāh (iḥtisāb), enjoining good and forbidding evil, fulfilling a devotional obligation, and based on religious perceptions and motives, to remove some wrongdoing here or there. This can include actions such as destroying places of alcohol, fornication, debauchery, or corruption, or assassinating a prominent figure of disbelief, oppression, or aggression against Muslims, their religion, rituals, or sanctities, or to remove any manifestation they consider religiously reprehensible and believe must be removed by force after it became impossible to do so by word or in the heart.

I am not here to evaluate the correctness, error, or utility of these actions, nor whether they achieved the goal of removing wrongdoing or led to greater evils. Rather, I mention this category here as a type of mujāhidīn who undertook such actions as an act of worship and a religious duty, this being

the basis of their intention.

Classification of the Components of the Jihādī Phenomenon According to Their Methodologies of Thought and Politico-Legal Approach:

They are primarily divided into two main types:

1. **Methodological Groups:**
   These are groups that possess a specific and detailed intellectual, politico-legal methodology, and a defined stance based on Sharīʿah regarding general politico-legal, doctrinal, and intellectual issues.

2. **Non-Methodological Groups:**
   These are groups whose members have united to perform the obligation of Jihād for a legally sanctioned objective—such as repelling an aggressor, removing wrongdoing, repelling injustice, fighting a government, or similar aims—and to bear arms, without having a detailed politico-legal methodology that defines their stance on political and other issues.

Methodological Jihādī groups are divided into three main categories:

1. **Activist Jihādī Groups:**
   Most of these emerged from the Islāmic awakening in the early 1960s and carried influences from the thought of the Muslim Brotherhood, in addition to the ideology based on the principles of loyalty and disavowal, and Divine Sovereignty. Among the earliest and greatest proponents of this ideology were the martyr Sayyid Quṭb in Egypt and Professor Abū al-Aʿlā Mawdūdī in Pakistan.

2. **Salafī Jihādī Groups:**
   These are Jihādī groups that, in addition to the aforementioned ideology, adopted a reliance on the doctrines of the Salaf (pious predecessors) according to the legal verdicts (fatāwā) of Imām Ibn Taymiyyah and similar leading figures of the Salafī school. They also adopted the jurisprudence of the Najdī mission and the ideas of Imām Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (may Allāh have mercy on them), as well as the ideas of those who followed this path after them.

3. **Reformist and Educational Mujāhid Groups (Sufi Jihādī groups, Jihādī scholars' groups, etc.):**
   These are groups founded on educational, scholarly, doctrinal (madhhabī), or Sufi order (ṭarīqah) principles, possessing an organizational structure whose members are bound by an oath of allegiance (bayʿah) to their leader, shaykh, or commander. They then took up arms for Jihād, usually against external enemies, or sometimes in internal matters.

Non-methodological Jihādī groups are also divided into two types:

1. **Organized Mujāhid Groups:**
   These are groups whose members are bound by an oath of allegiance (bayʿah), a commander (amīr), and a leadership. They have administrative and organizational structures. Their members are united by the Jihādī cause for which they have gathered, such as repelling an aggressor, removing any wrongdoing, or confronting any form of enemy to Islām and Muslims. However, they lack a specific intellectual framework for doctrine and education.

2. **Unorganized Mujāhid Blocs, Individuals, and Gatherings:**
   These are efforts by individuals, small blocs, or scattered mujāhid elements who have undertaken legitimate Jihādī actions in various places, but without any single individual or the collective group possessing a specific ideology, a methodology for doctrine and education, or a bond uniting their members.

This chapter specifically focuses on studying some features and experiences of the armed Jihādī current. It is the most prominent and significant component of the armed Jihādī phenomenon. It is the most impactful, indeed forming the basis of the phenomenon, and the most important aspect in terms of scale, impact, and the future of the confrontation between us and our enemies, and Allāh knows best.

Third: The Emergence of the Contemporary Jihādī Current and its Intellectual and Activist Stages of Development (1960 - 2001)

The birth of Jihādī current groups and organizations is considered a natural product of the political developments in the post-independence (albeit nominal) era from occupation in Arab and Islāmic countries. It is also considered a natural phased development and a spontaneous offshoot of the contemporary Islāmic awakening, which had begun around the fall of the Caliphate, i.e., the early 1930s, at least three decades before the birth of the Jihādī current, depending on the recency or antiquity of the Islāmic awakening's emergence and the conditions of each country, its occupation circumstances, and its general political situation.

As discussed in the previous two chapters, modern colonialism in Arab and Islāmic lands undertook the destruction of the Ummah's elements of resistance and renaissance after the fall of the Caliphate. It succeeded in dismantling the foundations of political, religious, and social authorities in most Arab and Islāmic countries. The qualitative shift in colonial methods, from old (direct military)

colonialism in Muslim lands to modern (economic, political, and cultural) colonialism, and its installation of apostate governments comprised of secularist generations or treacherous, collaborationist factions to act as its proxies in achieving its objectives, led to the Ummah's withdrawal from the field of direct confrontation. This was due to the obscured role of the external colonizer and the assumption of power by local "national" governments. By the nature of things, these governments were bound to clash with the various components of the Islāmic awakening, which had primarily arisen to return Muslims—in one way or another, according to each school's leanings and methodologies—to a life based on the teachings of their religion and governance by its Sharīʿah.

All post-independence governments in the Arab and Islāmic world, without exception, were established on secular foundations that separated religion from the state. They all ruled by other than what Allāh revealed, and renegades from among their own people undertook the task of legislating without Allāh's authority, just as they undertook the task of collaborating with and showing allegiance to the Ummah's enemies, openly serving their objectives. This was in addition to the characteristics of oppression, tyranny, despotism, and various forms of administrative and behavioral corruption that all these governments, without exception, exhibited.

Colonialism implanted the Zionist entity in the heart of the Islāmic world in Palestine. The state of Israel was officially established in 1947 on most of Palestinian land, and then Israel completed its occupation, in addition to parts of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, in 1967.

The Palestinian issue became a massive burden on the conscience of the Arab and Islāmic world. Western colonialism consolidated its economic occupation of the Arab and Islāmic world and plundered its resources, supporting and preserving the dictatorial governments it had established therein.

Thus, the grassroots and leadership of the Islāmic awakening found themselves facing this painful and strange reality that followed the colonial era. Various schools of thought and opinions emerged within the awakening itself to address this reality, leading to the differentiation of its schools and trends, as we saw in the fifth chapter.

While some believed the solution lay in education, reform, and withdrawal from politics, others saw the solution and reform in entering its arenas through legally permissible channels provided by those governments. A third group (the one we are concerned with in this chapter) believed that the breach had widened beyond repair and that it was necessary to take up arms to remedy these conditions. This was especially after those governments and their oppressive apparatuses proved ready to consistently clip the wings of the awakening by liquidating its leaders through assassination or imprisoning them for decades, persecuting their followers, and restricting all avenues of calling to Allāh, even peaceful ones. It was here, at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, that the initial ideas for the birth of the contemporary Jihādī current began to crystallize.

The Muslim Brotherhood movement (primarily) was the natural incubator where such ideas could be born and spread. The call of Ḥasan al-Bannā (may Allāh have mercy on him) had created a suitable climate for these developments. There is no clearer indication of this than its slogan, which summarized its methodology: "Allāh is our objective. The Messenger is our leader. The Qur'ān is our constitution. Jihād is our way. Death in the path of Allāh is our highest aspiration." This was despite its thought and practices carrying much intellectual and methodological intermingling from Sufi, Salafī, nationalist, democratic, and other influences. Its initial Jihādī practices also served as further proof of its suitability to be an incubator for the birth of the Jihādī current and thought within its fold.

The leaders and youth of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Syria participated in the Palestine War of 1947-1948. Ḥasan al-Bannā formed his special secret

apparatus, the military wing of the group, for Jihādī objectives. After Ḥasan al-Bannā's assassination in 1949 (may Allāh have mercy on him), members of this apparatus led and managed the secret resistance in the Suez Canal zone and its surroundings in the early 1950s. The apparatus participated in supporting the movement of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and the Free Officers in overthrowing King Fārūq. However, this perished individual (Nāṣir) had arranged with the enemies of this Ummah a program that included the liquidation of the Islāmic movement in Egypt, spearheaded by the Muslim Brotherhood.

He imprisoned their leadership and thousands of their rank-and-file in 1954, expanded his campaign against them, and executed some of them in 1965, including some of its finest thinkers and leading figures. This was in Egypt. As for Syria, the other important incubator for the Muslim Brotherhood movement, military coups swept away the national democratic post-independence governments that had succeeded one another since 1946. From 1954 onwards, coups sponsored by American intelligence and its experiments in Syria followed one another until the atmosphere was prepared for the Arab Socialist Baʿth Party to stage its coup in 1963. One of its top priorities was the liquidation of the Islāmic awakening, including the Muslim Brotherhood and others, and fighting Islām in all its components. Egypt and Syria constituted the early incubators for the birth and crystallization of Jihādī thought and its operational theories. This pattern was repeated in various Arab and Islāmic countries. These political, social, and cultural transformations, and the Westernization and secularization campaigns undertaken by various governments, raised important questions for the thought and methodology of the Islāmic awakening.

In Pakistan, during the 1950s, the writings of the brilliant and unique scholar Abū al-Aʿlā Mawdūdī (may Allāh have mercy on him) formed essential material for the crystallization of Jihādī thought. He (may Allāh have mercy on him) criticized the

stagnant state of traditional religious circles in Pakistan. Through his books, articles, and the newspaper of his movement, which he founded under the name "Jamāʿat-e-Islāmī in Pakistan," he addressed many of the most important politico-legal issues based on Sharīʿah and presented the contemporary reality of Muslims through them. He wrote about the requisites of the testimony of Tawhīd, the foundations of loyalty and disavowal, defined Jihād, its purposes, and objectives. He wrote about the birth of the Islāmic state, its characteristics, its constitution, its specifications, and the path to its establishment. One of his most important books, "Four Basic Qurʾānic Terms" (Al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-Arbaʿah), contained many fundamentals of contemporary Jihādī thought.

However, the undisputed pioneer of Jihādī thought in the modern era, to whose ideas the birth of the thinking methodology and movement theories in the "contemporary Jihādī current" can be attributed, was undoubtedly the martyred teacher, Professor Sayyid Quṭb (may Allāh have mercy on him). He began his life as a man of letters, a poet, and a critical researcher simultaneously. He experienced intellectual maturation during the tumultuous and critical era of contemporary Egyptian history in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, which saw the demise of the monarchy and the Free Officers' revolution, the occupation of Palestine, and the aggression against Egypt. He interacted closely with the Muslim Brotherhood and was influenced by their movement. His study trip to America had a profound impact on his discovery of the nature of the contemporary Crusader campaign against the Arab and Islāmic world, in addition to the penetrating insight Allāh endowed him with, a captivating pen, and a transparent spirit. The prison environment, where ʿAbd al-Nāṣir incarcerated him with most of the Muslim Brotherhood leaders from the early 1950s to the mid-1960s, formed the general milieu in which he penned his brilliant writings, which are rightly considered the intellectual and methodological foundation of the contemporary Jihādī current in the Arab and Islāmic world. His unique book, "In the Shade of the Qurʾān" (Fī Ẓilāl al-Qurʾān), an activist

interpretation of the Qurʾānic verses in light of narrations transmitted by exegetes, contained the essence of the activist theories of contemporary Jihādī thought and the essence of the concepts Sayyid wished to propound. His book "Milestones" (Maʿālim fī al-Ṭarīq), despite its small size, was the most important, containing the quintessence of that thought and its revolutionary, transformative Jihādī propositions. His extensive library of other books, such as "Characteristics of the Islāmic Conception" (Khaṣāʾiṣ al-Taṣawwur al-Islāmī), "This Religion" (Hādhā al-Dīn), and "Jāhiliyyah of the Twentieth Century" (Jāhiliyyat al-Qarn al-ʿIshrīn), among others, constituted an integrated methodology for a contemporary activist Jihādī thought suitable for that era.

Sayyid's thought (may Allāh have mercy on him) represented a qualitative leap in the intellectual trajectory of the Islāmic awakening in general and the Muslim Brotherhood in particular. The "mother" movement, as they called it, had to define its position regarding these propositions.

The traditional leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt adopted a rejecting and oppositional stance towards Sayyid and his ideas. His theories on Divine Sovereignty, loyalty and disavowal, separation from Jāhiliyyah, and distinct identity and methodology represented a significant divergence. The Brotherhood had to decide whether to proceed with him towards development or to part ways in a reactionary move that would deviate them even from fundamental principles previously part of their methodology.

The Brotherhood chose the second path to avoid confrontation with the authorities, and the effects of imprisonment, oppression, and whippings became evident in their new intellectual features. The General Guide, Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī (may Allāh have mercy on him), wrote his famous book "Preachers, Not Judges" (Duʿāh lā Quḍāh) in response to "Milestones" and the ideas of confrontation and clash with the Jāhiliyyah embodied by the existing political system, and the transformation it

imposes on societies, as presented in "In the Shade of the Qurʾān." Here, the Muslim Brotherhood movement and the contemporary political awakening diverged into two distinct and contradictory schools. "Milestones" and Sayyid's thought in general embodied the ideology of Divine Sovereignty, distinctness, and separation, consequently leading to the judgment of disbelief and apostasy upon existing ruling systems and an explicit call for Jihād against them, outlining the path for this Jihād.

The book "Preachers, Not Judges," as its expressive title indicates, represented the new methodology of the Muslim Brotherhood and the beginning of the path of regression they embarked upon since then. The essence of its theory was that the pioneers of the Islāmic awakening are callers to Islām and reform, not judges over rulers and people and their conditions, to the extent of determining their affiliation with Islām or their departure from it. This book formed one of the most important pillars of contemporary political Murjiʾism (deferral of judgment) in the burgeoning Islāmic movement, as its testimony included the apostate, disbelieving authorities and their pillars in Egypt and elsewhere as being within Islām.

These two books and these two lines of thought marked the beginning of the formation of the two main schools within the Islāmic awakening: the political school and the Jihādī school. This intellectual atmosphere, as previously explained, also led to the birth of the deviant school of excommunication (takfīr) in Egyptian prisons, on the margins of these intellectual conflicts, as has already been detailed.

I am not here to review the intellectual path of the political awakening. I return to tracing the Jihādī current and the beginning of the emergence of its methodologies and organizations.

Despite the importance of Sayyid's writings and their primacy in generating the intellectual identity of the Jihādī current, other important writings also emerged during that period in Egypt. Foremost among them are the writings of the martyred

legal scholar Professor ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿŪdah (may Allāh have mercy on him), whom ʿAbd al-Nāṣir executed, as well as the writings of the Ḥadīth scholar Shaykh Aḥmad Shākir (may Allāh have mercy on him), and others. Sayyid Quṭb (may Allāh have mercy on him) attempted to put his ideas into practice and tried to form the first secret Jihādī organization embodying those ideas, composed of a group of mujāhid youth, most of whom were members of the Muslim Brotherhood. However, his nascent experiment was quickly aborted, and he was executed on charges related to it (may Allāh have mercy on him). Thus, a wonderful saying and a righteous, highly significant vision he had seen in prison came true for him. Some of his contemporaries in prison narrated that shortly before his execution, he saw in a dream his writing desk drawer, which contained the papers on which he had written his ideas, open, and sparrows came, took the papers, and flew with them in every direction. He interpreted this as the spread of his thought throughout the world. And the saying that also came true for his writings is:

The martyred teacher Sayyid Quṭb (may Allāh the Exalted have mercy on him) said: "Not every word reaches the hearts of others, moving them, uniting them, and propelling them. It is the words that drip blood because they feed on the heart of a living human being. Every word that has lived has fed on a human heart. As for the words born in mouths, uttered by tongues, and not connected to that living divine spring, they were born dead and have not pushed humanity forward even an inch. No one will adopt them because they were born dead, and people do not adopt the dead."

And so, Sayyid's thought spread throughout the world. I saw his book "Milestones" in Afghanistan translated into Pashto and Persian. Indeed, I was informed that one of the old mujāhidīn from the days of the Jihād against the Russians entered a school in Nuristan—very remote, extremely rugged mountainous areas in the midst of the Hindu Kush mountains on the northern border of Kashmir and China, near

Badakhshan and the Wakhan Corridor, situated at an altitude of more than 5,000 meters above sea level—in an area untouched by any elements of civilization, neither water nor electricity nor anything else. He said he entered one of the schools and found Sayyid Quṭb's "Milestones" translated into the Nuristani language!

Glory be to Allāh! The migrating sparrows of truth had carried it and landed it there decades after his execution (may Allāh have mercy on him). Perhaps there is no living language of Muslims today into which many of Sayyid's books (may Allāh have mercy on him) have not been translated, let alone into global languages. This giant, whose intellectual impact the Crusaders and their leader America realize today in their campaign to combat terrorism, has become a primary target for their current intellectual and media campaign to fight, denigrate, and distort his legacy, and for their attack on educational curricula in our countries in general, and religious education curricula in particular.

As for Syria, the second important incubator for the emergence of the Islāmic awakening and the "contemporary Jihādī current," the martyred Shaykh Marwān Ḥadīd (may Allāh have mercy on him) appeared during the same period (1960-1965). He had gone to study in Egypt, embraced the thought of the Muslim Brotherhood, and returned as a member. The call was strong in Syria in the late 1950s. Shaykh Marwān Ḥadīd (may Allāh have mercy on him) became convinced that an affliction like the Baʿth Party, whose leadership was increasingly dominated by Nuṣayrī elements preparing to seize power, could only be confronted through Jihād. He held ideas similar to Sayyid's and was influenced by him. Shaykh Marwān was not a writer but a brilliant orator and an activist mujāhid poet. He founded the "Fighting Vanguard Organization of Hizb Allāh" (Tanẓīm al-Ṭalīʿah al-Muqātilah li-Ḥizb Allāh), as he initially named it, which later transformed into the "Fighting Vanguard of the Muslim Brotherhood" (al-Ṭalīʿah al-Muqātilah lil-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn). He made a Jihādī attempt that was crushed by the tanks of the Baʿthist

authorities in 1965. He tried again in 1970, but was soon arrested and then executed in 1975 (may Allāh have mercy on him).

After him, his students undertook the mission of igniting the longest contemporary Jihādī revolution against a government in the Arab world (1975-1982). Shaykh Saʿīd Ḥawwā (may Allāh have mercy on him) emerged within the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, and his books, which carried Jihādī thought and made important additions to it during the 1970s and 1980s, were published successively. Most of them bore the series title "In Construction" (Fī al-Bināʾ). Among them were books such as "Allāh," "The Messenger," "Islām," and "An Introduction to the Call of the Muslim Brotherhood." Some of his most important books that theorized Jihādī thought were "A Step Forward on the Path of Blessed Jihād" (Khuṭwah ilā al-Amām ʿalā Ṭarīq al-Jihād al-Mubārak), "Soldiers of Allāh: Culture and Ethics" (Jund Allāh Thaqāfatan wa Akhlāqan), and "Soldiers of Allāh: Organization and Planning" (Jund Allāh Tanẓīman wa Takhṭīṭan). These represented the peak of his Jihādī intellectual output. Thereafter, he suffered an intellectual decline as a result of the failed trajectory of Jihādī work in Syria, which eventually led him to democratic and Sufi aberrations that appeared in his later writings (may Allāh have mercy on him and forgive him).

I believe that from there—from Egypt and the Levant (al-Shām)—was the beginning. As for most other Arab countries, local political conditions and the colonial situation were similar, and this thought spread from Egypt and Syria to Sudan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan due to proximity.

Due to the early independence of Syria and Egypt, and the advancement of their education systems compared to almost all other Arab countries, all the Arabian Peninsula states imported teachers from Egypt and Syria for primary, intermediate, and secondary education, and even for university education, especially in the faculties of Sharīʿah, arts, law, humanities, and others. Likewise, most North African countries, particularly Algeria during the "Arabization" revolution led by Algerian

President Houari Boumédiène after independence to counter the Francization policy imposed by France over 130 years of colonialism, also imported teachers from Egypt and Syria.

Given that the call of the Muslim Brotherhood had spread widely among teachers and the educational sector in Egypt and Syria, many of those teachers were proponents of the Brotherhood or influenced by their call. This was one of the most important reasons for the transmission of the mother call—the fundamental pillar of the political and later Jihādī awakening—to those countries. This was in addition to the general spread of the local Islāmic awakening phenomenon in all those countries, the proliferation of Islāmic books and their trade, the abundance of printing presses and newspapers, and the active cultural movement in the Arab and Islāmic world during the post-independence era.

Thus, the winds of the Islāmic awakening and its schools blew across the Arab and Islāmic world, and its schools, organizations, and groups mutually influenced each other.

However, the activist thought of the Jihādī current, and its primary intellectual incubator—namely, the thought of the Muslim Brotherhood—swept across the Arab and Islāmic world mainly from Egypt and Syria (the Levant).

This activist thought, which formed within the Muslim Brotherhood movement, then developed, became independent, and distinguished itself in "Quṭbist" thought—named after Sayyid Quṭb (may Allāh have mercy on him)—was one of two components of contemporary Jihādī current ideology. The writings of his brother, Professor Muḥammad Quṭb, after him, and what was added to this school from the writings of Muslim Brotherhood authors from various countries in the 1970s, also contributed. Another important component that joined in its formation came from

the Arabian Peninsula, from the lands of Najd and Ḥijāz, which were falsely named "Saudi Arabia."

The third Saudi state was established—as previously indicated—with British planning and support, and King ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Āl Saʿūd was crowned sultan over the lands of Najd and Ḥijāz and their annexes, forming the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1935. The marketable commodity that ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz seized upon, to be the substance of his propaganda and deception of the people, was his claim of reviving the call of Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (may Allāh have mercy on him). This call had been almost eradicated with the fall of the second Saudi state during its conflict with the Ottoman Caliphate, which had enlisted the ruler of Egypt at the time, Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha, for this task.

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's sons inherited from him the business of trading in the Wahhābī call. And Allāh had a subtle plan concerning them and the enemies of Islām. The sons continued their father's trade in the Wahhābī call. They established numerous institutions and expended great efforts and vast sums of money for this purpose. Many sincere individuals dedicated to the call and religion worked in this field.

Thus, a generation of men of the Islāmic awakening was educated during the three decades of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s under senior scholars who inherited and carried the Wahhābī call.

With a suitable atmosphere and abundant funds due to the oil boom during that period, the Wahhābī call flourished with the support of successive Saudi governments.

The call of Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and the great imāms of the Najdī mission was revived, and their valuable books were published. The heritage of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah and his student Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allāh the Exalted have mercy on them) was also revived, as were the books of other proponents of the

Salafī creed and the school of Ahl al-Ḥadīth. The Saudi government undertook the printing and distribution of millions of copies of these works over the years.

Governmental and private religious institutions and Saudi universities undertook their printing, publication, teaching, and dissemination throughout the Islāmic world. Many sincere and distinguished scholars from the Arabian Peninsula and those who studied under them carried out this work.

The focus of the Wahhābī call and the Salafī creed, as is known, was on reviving the jurisprudence of evidence (fiqh al-dalīl), the methodology of Ahl al-Ḥadīth, and the doctrines of Ahl al-Sunnah wa-l-Jamāʿah. It concentrated on combating innovations and deviations that had infiltrated through many deviant Sufi orders and the stagnation, submission, and intellectual backwardness they had left behind. This call also focused on the issue of loyalty and disavowal, supporting the people of faith, and opposing disbelievers such as Jews, Christians, polytheists, and their allies among the hypocrites. This call, as is well-known, also emphasizes the purification of Tawhīd, singling out Allāh in His Lordship (rubūbiyyah) and Divinity (ulūhiyyah), and affirming His transcendence through His names and attributes. It stresses the excommunication of anyone who disputes Allāh's Lordship or Divinity through legislation, polytheism, or judgment contrary to His judgment, and so on.

It was part of Saudi policy, for the propagandistic purposes of the rulers which coincided with the aims of sincere callers, to bring hundreds of thousands of foreign students from various Islāmic countries as expatriates for study, and to open scholarships for them in Saudi universities specializing in religious education, such as Imām Muḥammad ibn Saʿūd Islāmic University and the Islāmic University of Madīnah, among others.

In these circles, hundreds of thousands of young Muslim students graduated, carrying these ideas back to their countries from the early 1960s until the present,

though the Saudi government is now trying to change this approach in response to America's program to alter the intellectual and cultural structure of Muslims as part of the war of ideas within its comprehensive war on what it calls terrorism, extremism, and fundamentalism in the Arab and Islāmic world.

As I mentioned, thousands of teachers from Egypt and Syria had gone to Saudi Arabia during that period, many of whom were proponents of the Muslim Brotherhood and pioneers of the Islāmic awakening in general.

Saudi Arabia, especially during the reign of King Fayṣal, also became a natural refuge for persecuted and exiled Muslim Brotherhood leaders from Egypt under ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, as Fayṣal was in conflict with him. Many Muslim Brotherhood callers and shaykhs from Syria also fled there due to Baʿthist persecution since the mid-1960s. Most of these individuals worked as teachers in Islāmic universities in Saudi Arabia.

A very important amalgamation occurred there during the three crucial decades of the awakening (1960-1990) between the activist thought of the Muslim Brotherhood school, especially its Quṭbist branch, and the doctrinal thought and jurisprudential heritage of the Salafī call and the Wahhābī school. This amalgamation then returned to Egypt and the Levant, and subsequently to the rest of the Arab and Islāmic world.

This amalgamation gave birth to two very important schools within the Islāmic awakening since the mid-1970s:

- **The Surūriyyah School:**
  (Named after one of its early proponents). Its methodology is based on a mixture of Muslim Brotherhood activism and Salafī-Wahhābī thought. It is a theoretical, intellectual, political, and daʿwah-oriented school, which practically had no movement whose operational experience could be

recorded. We are not concerned with discussing it here.

- **The Salafī Jihādiyyah School:**
  Its methodology consists of a mixture of Quṭbist activist Jihādī thought with the adoption of the Salafī creed and the methodology of the Wahhābī call. This is the primary intellectual and methodological identity that characterized the Jihādī current during the 1980s and 1990s, which is the current we are discussing in this chapter.

In short, I point to a matter of utmost importance in understanding the intellectual identity of the contemporary Jihādī current.

The Muslim Brotherhood methodology, with its political and educational character, and Quṭbist activism, with its distinct character of separation based on the principles of Divine Sovereignty, formed the politico-legal and activist dimension in the thinking methodology of the contemporary Jihādī current.

Similarly, the Salafī methodology and many influences from the Wahhābī call and its jurisprudential output formed the jurisprudential and doctrinal foundation that answered most of the pending politico-legal questions raised by the activist Jihādī methodology and its call for confrontation with the ruling systems of ignorance in the Islāmic world. This included:
Establishing Sharīʿah proof for the disbelief of rulers governing by other than what Allāh revealed and allying with the enemies of Muslims, then the sequence of Sharīʿah rulings that follow, such as rulings on rebelling against them, nullifying their legitimacy, and fighting their supporters, among dozens of other derivative Sharīʿah issues.

When most schools of the Islāmic awakening adopted the democratic path and proposed various conceptions to answer the question of the problem and solution in the contemporary reality of Muslims, and the different schools of the Islāmic awakening engaged in numerous intellectual and jurisprudential debates, the jurisprudence of Imām Ibn Taymiyyah, the Salafī methodology, and the heritage of the Wahhābī school formed the primary basis for the Jihādī current in navigating these contests.

Thus, we can summarize the intellectual structure of the contemporary Jihādī current with the following equation:
Fundamentals of Muslim Brotherhood thought + Activist methodology of the martyr Sayyid Quṭb + Politico-legal jurisprudence of Imām Ibn Taymiyyah and the Salafī school + Doctrinal and jurisprudential heritage of the Wahhābī call = The politico-legal activist methodology of the Jihādī current.

The primary arena for the maturation of these intellectual and methodological components during the 1970s and 1980s was in Egypt, the Levant, and the Arabian Peninsula, especially in the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries (Saudi Arabia). From there, it spread to other countries, as I will explain later, noting that each of these arenas in Arab and Muslim lands, the nature of its awakening components, and its stage of maturity had an impact on the nature of the Jihādī thought born there and the nature of the experience accordingly.

The impact was direct and rapid in Jordan, Lebanon, and Yemen. It was slow in countries like Iraq due to its strict security regime. The impact was limited in the Arab Gulf states and Saudi Arabia due to the nature of their oil-based societies, small populations, and the stagnation of intellectual and cultural life there at that time. As for Libya and the Maghreb countries, this was delayed due to the late emergence of the Islāmic awakening there until the early 1970s, owing to their independence circumstances, the nature of their regimes, and the deep Western influence of

French colonialism. However, early Jihādī attempts were recorded in Morocco (1963) and Algeria (1973), without any influence from or connection to the intellectual wave of the Eastern-born Jihādī current that we are discussing. Similarly, the impact was limited in the Horn of Africa and Somalia due to their circumstances, as most influences of the awakening reached them late, through students who went to study in the West or in neighboring Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan, were influenced by the ideas of the awakening, and returned with them to their countries to merge with local awakening data and conditions.

This was also roughly the case in countries on the peripheries of the Islāmic world, such as Indonesia, the Philippines, East Asian countries, and Central Africa, as well as the Soviet republics in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The Muslim countries most affected by and influential in the Islāmic awakening and its general schools in the Arab world were Pakistan and Turkey, due to proximity and overlap in more than one field.

As for the Jihādī current, in terms of the birth of its ideology and the transition of its adherents to the field of application and confrontation with governments, its emergence in different places was linked to several factors, such as political, social, cultural, and economic conditions in each country, in addition to the level and type of the Islāmic awakening and the arrival of the Jihādī current's intellectual influences to that place.

Then came the Afghan Jihād experience (1984-1992), leading to the formation of the Jihādī school whose members were called "Arab Afghans," ushering the Jihādī current into a phase of globalization, as we shall see in the following section, Allāh willing.

Several Jihādī attempts were made by various groups of the Jihādī current against some existing regimes in the Arab and Islāmic world, at different levels and scales, from the early 1960s to the end of the twentieth century. The most important of these, according to their chronological order and as far as I recall, are as follows:

Most Important Armed Attempts and Experiences of the Jihādī Current (1960 - 2000)

1. The Moroccan Youth Movement (Ḥarakat al-Shabībah al-Maghribiyyah) in Morocco (Marrakesh), led by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Karīm Muṭīʿ, against the government of the late King Ḥasan II, who met his demise (1963).
2. The attempt by the martyred Shaykh Sayyid Quṭb (may Allāh have mercy on him) and the Jihād Organization against the rule of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir in Egypt (1965).
3. The movement of the martyred Shaykh Marwān Ḥadīd (may Allāh have mercy on him) against Baʿthist rule in Syria (1965).
4. Jihād movements against communist regimes in Afghanistan before the Soviet occupation (1965-1975).
5. The experience of the Vanguard Organization (EkiNGiLAR) in Turkey during the civil war (1972).
6. The Islāmic State movement led by the martyred Shaykh Muṣṭafā Būyaʿlī (may Allāh have mercy on him) in Algeria (1973-1976).
7. The Islāmic Jihādī Revolution in Syria led by the Fighting Vanguard, students of Shaykh Marwān Ḥadīd (1975-1982).
8. The Jihād Organization and al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah movement in Egypt against Anwar Sādāt, then against his successor Ḥusnī Mubārak (1981-1997).
9. The Jihādī attempt against Gaddafi's rule in Libya (1986).
10. Some limited Jihādī attempts and the coup attempt by the military wing of the Islāmic Tendency Movement (Ḥarakat al-Ittijāh al-Islāmī) in Tunisia (1986).

11. Jihādī experiences of various groups in Algeria starting from (1991).
12. Jihādī confrontations against the communist regime in Tajikistan since (1992).
13. Limited Jihādī attempts in the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries (Saudi Arabia) since (1994).
14. Jihādī confrontations in Libya (1994-1996) and the experience of the Libyan Islāmic Fighting Group (al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah al-Muqātilah).
15. The armed uprising of the Movement for the Enforcement of Sharīʿah (Ḥarakat Nafādh Sharīʿat) in northwestern Pakistan (1996).
16. Attempts to form Jihādī groups in Morocco since (1996).
17. The Jihādī attempt against the pro-American communist regime of Karimov in Uzbekistan, and the formation of the Islāmic Movement of Uzbekistan (1998).
18. The Jihādī experience of the Aden-Abyan Army in Yemen since (1999).
19. The Jihādī attempt in the Nabaṭiyyah mountains in Lebanon (2000).

During the same period, numerous Jihādī movements and confrontations against various forms of foreign occupation and aggression on Muslim countries also took place. I have classified these under the heading of Mujāhid Movements and Organizations to distinguish them—for academic classification purposes—from the Jihādī current that we are concerned with, which together with them forms what I have termed the contemporary Jihādī phenomenon during the second half of the twentieth century. Among the most important of these experiences and movements are the following:

Some Experiences of Mujāhid Confrontations and Movements against Foreign Occupation and Aggression:

1. Jihād and resistance movements against Indian occupation in Kashmir and the Indian state of Assam.
2. Jihād movements against Pagans in Burma and Arakan.

3. Mujāhid liberation movements in the Philippines, such as the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Abū Sayyāf Group.
4. Groups that waged Jihād in Eritrea against Ethiopian occupation.
5. Mujāhid groups against Ethiopian occupation in the Horn of Africa (Ogaden, Afar, etc.).
6. The Islāmic Party of Turkistan (Ḥizb al-Islāmī al-Turkistānī), which fights against Chinese occupation of East Turkistan.
7. The Tawhīd Group (Jamāʿat al-Tawhīd), formed by Sunni mujāhidīn during the Lebanese civil war, confronting the Christian alliance and Nuṣayrī sectarian forces supported by the Syrian regime (1975-1982).
8. Jihād against Soviet occupation in Afghanistan (1979-1992).
9. The Islāmic Resistance Movement (Ḥamās) confronting Israeli occupation in Palestine since (1987).
10. The Islāmic Jihād Movement confronting Israeli occupation in Palestine since (1989).
11. Confrontations of Kurdish Islāmic groups against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, then against the aggression of secular Kurdish parties in Iraqi Kurdistan, since (1990).
12. The Jihādī experience in Bosnia against Serbian aggression (1994-1996).
13. The Jihādī experience against Russian occupation in Chechnya and the Caucasus since (1995).
14. Jihādī confrontations against Christian aggression in Indonesia since (1998).

Fourth: The Major Turning Point in the History of the Jihādī Current:

The Afghan Jihād against the Russians and the Gathering of Mujāhidīn (Arab Afghans) (1984 - 1992)

The armies of the defunct Russian Soviet Union openly occupied Afghanistan in 1979, after having done so indirectly through several communist military coups since 1965. The invaders' entry led the entire Afghan populace—its tribes, scholars, and various classes—to engage in Jihād and resistance.

As I previously indicated in the course of this research, no one expected this poor, destitute, and underdeveloped nation to withstand such a formidable invasion. It seemed as though America had acquiesced to the annexation of this territory into the colonial inventory of the Russians, just as they had annexed Central Asia, the Caucasus, and other regions. However, the valiant resistance of the Afghan people between 1979 and 1982 caught the attention of the American administration and its senior strategic thinkers, such as former President Nixon, who personally made a field visit at that time to Afghan refugee camps on the Pakistani border. Consequently, Congress decided to adopt the Afghan Jihād issue as an arena where America could repay the Russians for the Vietnam blow manifold, and even make it the final battleground of the Cold War where that conflict would be decisively settled by a knockout blow, as indeed happened within ten years.

America oversaw the formation of a global alliance to confront the Russians and the Warsaw Pact in Afghanistan. It drew behind it the entire NATO alliance and its member states, Western European countries, as well as its major economic allies like Canada, Australia, and Japan, to form a political, media, and economic alliance supporting it in this war. A financial policy was established, stipulating a share of financial aid, amounting to millions of dollars, from each of these countries, and everyone contributed.

However, the most important part of the alliance America formed to support the Afghan Jihād came from Arab and Islāmic countries, foremost among which, and most significant in their role, were Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Egypt, along with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states contributed

the largest share of financial support for that war, whether officially at the governmental level or through encouraging and permitting the flow of private donations for Jihād in Afghanistan to reach the Afghan mujāhidīn. Saudi Arabia, with its religious authority stemming from its control over the Two Holy Sanctuaries and its religious and academic institutions, also played a prominent media role. Its intelligence chief at the time, Prince Turkī ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, supervised and managed its program.

Pakistan played the main role on the ground. Its border with Afghanistan stretched for more than 2,200 kilometers and contained dozens of major crossings for the delivery of supplies and various forms of support for the Afghan Jihād. Its military intelligence (ISI), headed at the time by General Ḥamīd Gul, played a key role in organizing the Jihādī parties, overseeing the formation and distribution of financial aid and weapons among them, and providing logistical services and various types of field support. This sometimes extended to the Pakistani army's practical participation in combat and support with heavy weapons in border battles; I witnessed this firsthand in the battles of Jalālābād (1989). As for Egypt, its most notable participation was an agreement with the Americans to repay part of its debts to them in the form of arms deals sent to Afghanistan via Pakistan. I also witnessed this; it was common for us to open ammunition and weapon crates bearing the insignia of the Egyptian army. This was because Anwar Sādāt had decided to adopt American armament for the Egyptian army and began to dismantle the Russian presence in Egypt in what became known as the "Open Door" policy (Infitāḥ). Thus, it was beneficial for him to reduce his stockpile of weapons and ammunition that were no longer needed in the late 1970s.

These countries, in addition to most Arab, Islāmic, and even Western countries and their followers, played a highly significant media role in supporting the Afghan

Jihād, promoting it, and urging everyone who wished, and even some who did not, to contribute.

As for the third ally that America brought in—or rather, allowed to enter—the line of support for the Afghan Jihād, it was the Islāmic awakening in its entirety and all its movements. Emotions surged spontaneously among the leadership and grassroots of the awakening, driven by religious sympathy for their brethren in faith and creed who were subjected to a war of annihilation and brutal occupation by a power representing the pinnacle of disbelief and atheism from the perspective of Islām and Muslims. Thus, the green light passed from America to its lackeys—the rulers and governments of the Arab and Islāmic world—who in turn signaled it to the Islāmic movements to participate in this broad, indirect alliance where purposes and interests converged. The Arab and Islāmic states had their own interests in this green light in response to their American master: to burnish their reputation by helping Muslims, and to open a door for emigration for the awakening and its cadres, especially its political and Jihādī elements, to vent their fundamentalist desires and feelings far away, thousands of kilometers distant. Perhaps they would find their desired martyrdom in the path of Allāh, and the rulers would be relieved of their clamor in their own countries.

Thus, with the green light flashing for the awakening, Friday sermons, lectures, conferences, festivals, publications, books, newspapers, and all means of expression and propaganda within the awakening ignited, promoting the Afghan Jihād and calling out, "O steeds of Allāh, mount up!" And tens of thousands, for whom happiness in participation was decreed, mounted up.

[I draw attention to the fact that I am writing this paragraph as an eyewitness and participant during that period, having experienced it from 1987 to 1992. I then continued to follow it closely until 1996, when I returned to be present on the

ground in its second phase, completely different from the first, during the period extending from mid-1996 to its end in December 2001.]

Thus, at that time, various segments, groups, and organizations of the Islāmic awakening and its different schools found an opportunity to support and benefit from that thriving market, where everyone had their own goal and desire from that participation. This is not the place to review the objectives of each group, what they gained, or what they achieved. Rather, I mention it because of the importance of this blessed juncture for the contemporary Jihādī current during that phase and what followed, up to this day, and indeed for the future, I believe.

Thus, an indirect alliance was formed among all those united by enmity towards communism and the Soviet Union, or who had an interest in confronting and eliminating it. This ranged from America and its allies in the Western bloc, to their enemies in the Jihādī current, passing through their allies, the rulers of the Arab and Islāmic world, as well as various circles of the Islāmic awakening, despite the differing perspectives of its schools towards America, the West, and these governments.

Here, I wish to address two problematic issues, or, if you will, two enormous lies propagated by Western, especially American, media, and the media subservient to them in Arab and Islāmic countries. Their truth must be clarified to the general public, and specifically to Islamists, Jihādīs, and their audiences. They are:

1. America's role in the victory of the Afghan Jihād.
2. The suspicion of collusion between Arab mujāhidīn and Islamists who participated in the Afghan Jihād with America, and their connection to the CIA during that affair, as Western media and their followers claim today.

I reiterate that the value of this testimony comes from my firsthand participation and proximity to sources of information and those who managed events during that period among Arab and Afghan Jihādīs and Islamists.

1. America's Role in the Victory of the Afghan Jihād

The American media, with its various outlets controlled by Zionized Jews and Crusaders, has sought to portray the victory of the Afghan Jihād as merely a success of American policy and CIA programs in Afghanistan. America has largely succeeded in spreading this false propaganda. They worked on this through various means of propaganda, starting from Rambo films and his "blessed" incursions into Afghanistan, where he shot down planes, destroyed forts, and freed Afghan and American "mujāhidīn" hostages with them. He rode horses, drove armored vehicles, and flew through the sky in Russian helicopters! He was wounded repeatedly but did not die, and was fused inside a destroyed armored vehicle, yet his bulging muscles did not melt! He managed to shower his American-muscle-admiring viewers with a torrent of trite wisdom and ridiculous propaganda from his drooping, half-paralyzed lip. In the end, he delivered the message about America's mercy for the oppressed, its support for the wronged, its eagerness to help Muslims, and its primary role in the victory of the Afghans, whom the fictional film depicted as admiring and loving America! Thus, his muscles returned safely to their base in Hollywood to continue parties and debauched dancing with its beautiful starlets, a truly expressive symbol of America, its bulging muscles, small brain, and half-paralyzed lip feigning wisdom!

The American media, underestimating the intelligence of those who believed it, also focused on the role of Stinger missiles in the victory of the Afghan Jihād, and how they supposedly turned the tide of battle when Russian aircraft began to fall to them, leading to a shift in the course of battles from the defeat of the mujāhidīn to their victory! This lie was spread through various media and propaganda channels,

from documentaries to books to newspapers, to the memoirs of intelligence officers, and so on.

It should be known that the limited number of American Stinger missiles entered Afghanistan ten years after the Russian invasion, shortly before their withdrawal. They were rarely used in the final decisive battles, and only a limited number of aircraft were shot down by them. Only a very few among hundreds of thousands of mujāhidīn ever saw them. Pakistani intelligence stole its share of them, as was its habit of stealing its share of all financial and material aid that came for the Afghan mujāhidīn, from vehicles and various relief materials to equipment, weapons, and ammunition, which were forcibly routed through Pakistan on their way to them.

So, I truly do not know how minds could swallow this massive lie about the role of this Stinger missile in the victory of the Afghan Jihād, in which millions of Afghans participated and over a million armed mujāhidīn were organized in the ranks of Jihādī parties. The Afghan people offered over two million martyrs and five million refugees, from a population that did not exceed 16 million. I do not know what role the Stinger played in destroying over fifty thousand Russian military vehicles, killing over 30,000 Russian soldiers on the ground, and over 150,000 Afghan communist militiamen, not to mention hundreds of thousands of operations during a Jihād that lasted for more than fifteen years, began five years before the Russian invasion, and continued for three years after it, until Kabul fell into the hands of the mujāhidīn—that is, from 1973 to 1992. Despite the absurdity of this "Stinger" lie and its flimsiness in the face of the simplest information about the course of the Afghan Jihād, it found its way into the minds of millions of naive viewers of small and large screens. This is the magic of American media, and the field of victory for these cowardly deceivers, who belittled the minds of most of humanity, and unfortunately, they obeyed them!

2. The Suspicion of Collusion between Arab Mujāhidīn and America, and their Connection to the CIA during the Afghan Jihād

It is astonishing today how global and Arab media programs—films, interviews, analyses, newspapers, books, and so on—pass over this "lie" with utmost nonchalance, moving on to other topics as if it were a self-evident, well-known fact!

They present to people a massive lie as if it were a truth, stating that:
American intelligence (CIA) created the "Arab Afghans" and their leaders, such as Shaykh Usāmah ibn Lādin and Shaykh ʿAbdullāh ʿAzzām, in order to destroy the Soviet Union. And that these creations have turned against America today, some of them destroying its towers in New York and Washington, while most of them returned to their countries to strike its interests, kill its citizens, and fight its allies among the rulers of Arab and Muslim countries. And that the phenomenon of armed Jihād in Arab countries is an offshoot of the Afghan Jihād, and therefore a creation of American intelligence that has gone rogue. They say that America has fallen into the situation described by their common proverb: "He who creates ghosts will have them turn on him."

So, what is the truth of this extremely dangerous fabrication against the reputation of Jihād and Jihādīs in this era?

I will clarify this through the following concise points, with Allāh's help:

- As for the claim that the phenomenon of armed Jihād in Arab and Muslim countries is an offshoot of the gathering of Arab Afghans in the Afghan Jihād, the truth is precisely the opposite.
  The truth is that the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan was a result of the Arab Jihād that preceded it; it is one of the achievements of the Arab Jihādī current in Arab lands, one of its offshoots, and one of its stages of development, as mentioned earlier.

The contemporary Jihādī current is a product of the Islāmic awakening that emerged in the early 1930s, and it separated from it in the early 1960s. Many Jihādī experiences took place between the early 1960s and the early 1980s, i.e., twenty years before the Afghan Jihād. Indeed, the leaders, cadres, prominent figures, and pillars of the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan are remnants, cadres, figures, and shaykhs of the Arab Jihādī current.

Shaykh ʿAbdullāh ʿAzzām was one of the prominent figures and veterans of the Jihād in Palestine, and the Jordanian regime exiled him from Amman for his Jihādī propositions and opposition to the regime. Shaykh Usāmah ibn Lādin was raised in the Islāmic awakening, supported more than one Jihād movement in Arab countries, and contributed to supporting the Jihād in Syria in the early 1980s, before heading to Afghanistan.

Similarly, many cadres, who are difficult to enumerate here—early trainers and field commanders who undertook the task of establishing camps and building the infrastructure for the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan—were cadres of Arab Jihād organizations, especially from Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and elsewhere. They were the nucleus of the Arab gathering that undertook work in training, media, military operations, field relief work, and other activities, until mujāhidīn flocked from Arab and Islāmic countries, and the gathering, which began as a small contingent in 1984, grew from 1987 to 1991 to reach about forty thousand Arab mujāhidīn by the early 1990s.

- As for the alleged relationship of the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan with the Americans and their wretched organization (CIA), if these villains had any role, it was in the authorization and green light they gave to their henchmen—the rulers of Arab and Muslim countries—to allow the mujāhid youth to exercise their natural right and the commands of their religion to go to Afghanistan. And that the intelligence agencies of those criminal countries

should leave them alone and not obstruct them as they went to perform their religious obligation. It was also in the limited role of the media outlets of those Arab and Islāmic countries in promoting the Afghan Jihād. And in America's role in instructing Saudi Arabia to have its paid religious establishment issue a fatwa that Jihād was an individual obligation (farḍ ʿayn) in Afghanistan—which is true—and to allow righteous callers from the imāms of daʿwah and reform in Saudi Arabia to proclaim this Sharīʿah truth. And to allow the people in the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries to perform the obligation of Jihād with their wealth to support their brethren in creed and religion. And to encourage young men who wished to go there, to the extent that the Saudi airline company reduced the price of a plane ticket from Saudi Arabia to Pakistan by 75% for anyone wanting to go for Jihād in Afghanistan, making it cheaper than a domestic flight. Undoubtedly, the Āl Saʿūd had their propagandistic and other interests in these facilitations. America also contributed by instructing Pakistan to open its embassies to issue entry visas for Arab and Muslim youth from everywhere to travel through its territory to Afghanistan, and to allow Arabs freedom of movement, which reached the point of opening training camps on Pakistani territory near Afghanistan and providing logistical services for the Afghan Jihād. Undoubtedly, Pakistan had its regional and national interests in this, and this is not the place to investigate these details.

Indeed, there were also personal interests for war millionaires among officers in the Pakistani army, intelligence, and police from the movement of this volume of people and money between the outside world and Afghanistan through their territory. So, if American authorizations to their petty agents are considered a contribution to the making of the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan, it is that and no more. And their petty agents among the rulers in Saudi

Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt, and elsewhere had their own interests in that.

- As for what is claimed about Americans training Arabs, arranging their programs, assisting them in military operations, or any practical relationship on the ground, this is pure falsehood and fabrication.
  I personally worked in military training and as a lecturer in intellectual and methodological fields. I was in contact with the leaders of the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan. Through this, I can testify and affirm that this claim has no basis in truth. I am not here to chronicle the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan to narrate training events and operational mechanisms. In short, it was the sum of sincere individual efforts, which began with old Jihādī cadres and some professional military cadres—retirees or those dismissed from service in the armies of several Arab and Islāmic countries—whose contributions played a very useful role. Then, the experiences of emerging cadres in the arena began to accumulate and gather.
  Anyone familiar with the intellectual, psychological, and methodological situation, and with the feelings towards Americans, the West, and disbelievers in general, and even towards our rulers and their petty assistants, among the Arab Jihādī leadership and its youth base in Afghanistan and elsewhere, knows that this claim is implausible and impossible.

- As for the fact that the interests and objectives of all parties to the indirect alliance I mentioned—to fight the Soviet Union, each separately in practice, but united on a single goal—is an actual reality, it has often been repeated in the world of politics and the intersection of interests throughout history. It continues to be repeated here and there, and this is in the nature of things. America wanted to defeat the Soviet Union and win the Cold War, after the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact had dealt it painful blows in more than one

field. The Afghan issue was a golden opportunity for the Americans, and they exploited it correctly and obtained what Nixon called in his famous book "Victory Without War," achieving it with an enviable mastery.
Western Europe and NATO countries wanted to achieve gains and establish a foothold there, so they participated in that endeavor for their own interests as European countries, and each for its individual interests. Each country achieved what it wanted to a relative extent. Today, various European institutions are spreading under the banner of humanitarian services to carve out lucrative gains from the Afghan arena, each according to its past and present presence.
Pakistan wanted to achieve national and regional interests that are too numerous to detail here; indeed, recounting what Pakistan achieved would require a separate book. It provided America with the services it wanted in the Afghan arena: first, to support the Afghan Jihād; second, to tear apart its gains; third, to destroy Afghanistan in a civil war; fourth, to confront the Taliban and overthrow their state; fifth, to kill Arab mujāhidīn and hand them over to their enemies; sixth, it is now proceeding to sell out the Kashmir issue; and seventh, to destroy the infrastructure of Islamists within Pakistan itself. And the list goes on. Thus, Pakistani governments have always implemented what America wanted. May Allāh's curse be upon the oppressors and hypocrites.
The same can be said about the other roles in Afghanistan played by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and others, and about India, Central Asian countries, Iran, and China from neighboring countries, which also played their game, extending to the Islāmic and Jihādī awakening movements and everyone who entered the Afghan game, whether they won or lost.
This applies to the various Arab and Islāmic organizations that were present in Afghanistan.

In short, the Afghan Jihād issue became an area of intersecting global and regional interests, the likes of which rarely recur. Everyone united against the Soviet Union, and each had their own intentions and objectives.

- As for the interests of non-Jihādī Islāmic movements, they were diverse, ranging from good intentions to serve brethren in creed and religion, to the self-interests of each movement, including daʿwah, organizational, and material gains, down to the personal self-interests of some individuals.

So, what was the Jihādīs' objective in coming to Afghanistan?!
Their objective, after the intention of Jihād, performing the obligation, and seeking martyrdom in the path of Allāh on the part of most of their leaders and members, was twofold and strategic. I mention them according to their importance and based on what I personally witnessed due to my direct, indeed organic, involvement in the Jihādī current, and subsequently this gathering to which they gave the beautiful, "dramatic" name that I love and to which I belong: the "Arab Afghans":

1. The primary objective for most Jihādī entities, organizations, and cadres was preparation and training.
   This involved organizing ranks, gathering cadres, recruiting members, establishing public relations, attracting donations, and training a B.C. organization's members for their specific cause in their own countries. This objective dominated the thinking of most, if not all, Arab Jihādī organizations, as well as non-Arab ones. It was: "to overthrow the apostate governments in their respective countries and establish Islāmic governments ruling by the Sharīʿah of Allāh."

2. Working to liberate Afghanistan.
   And to establish legitimate Islāmic governments therein, which would be a launching pad for establishing the Sharīʿah of Allāh on earth, a safe haven, and a rear base for Jihād against various enemies of Allāh and in all Muslim causes, starting from Palestine and extending to every cause in which Islām has a share and identity.

Everyone varied in their intention between these two goals, to a greater or lesser extent, according to their differing orientations.

Even for me personally, my goal that brought me to Afghanistan, which I failed to achieve there during its first phase (1987-1992), was to rebuild a Jihādī organization to continue the Jihādī project that had taken place in Syria (1975-1982) and collapsed for reasons I detailed along with its history in my comprehensive book "The Islāmic Jihādī Revolution in Syria: Pains and Hopes" (Al-Thawrah al-Islāmiyyah al-Jihādiyyah fī Sūriyā - Ālām wa Āmāl), the first edition of which was published in Peshawar (1990). This was in addition to my conviction in the second goal and my contribution to it, and I ask Allāh for acceptance. Then, Afghanistan and other experiences after that influenced me towards a global, internationalist Jihādī orientation later on. Otherwise, I initially came to Afghanistan, like others, for that specific reason related to my country and its particular calamity.

Did the Arab Jihādī gathering achieve its objectives there, amidst the conflicting rush of those gathered to defeat the stubborn Russian bear?
I believe a large portion of those objectives was achieved. This is not the place to narrate the details, which I may record if Allāh facilitates my writing on the history and lessons of our experiences during the two Jihādī phases of the Arab Afghans in Afghanistan (1984-1992 / 1996-2001).

I will suffice here by saying that the greatest gain for the Jihādī current from that experience was the globalization of the Jihādī current intellectually and operationally, the exchange of ideas and experiences, and the acquaintance among its cadres from different countries, then its spread to various parts of the world. This was the greatest gain.
This was in addition to achieving the greatest military victory for Muslims in their modern history, proving the ability of Islām and Muslims to defeat superpowers despite disparities in capabilities, and instilling this conviction in an Ummah that was on the verge of accepting defeat as destiny.
The gains are many, in addition to the personal gains achieved by those whose deeds Allāh accepted, after He honored them with presence and participation, both those who met their end and those who await.

As for the primary loss, in my view, it was that circumstances on one hand, and the heterogeneous gathering on the other, as well as the leadership that managed that Jihādī gathering lacking the ability to generate an organized global Jihādī gathering or current that could impose its presence and contribution in the Ummah's issues and the arena of the Islāmic awakening. International conditions, I believe, were favorable, and there was an abundance of youth, cadres, prominent figures, callers, and veteran mujāhidīn from multiple countries, as well as available funds and other factors, which could have enabled that, in a rarely occurring opportunity. But Allāh decreed, and He does what He wills, and I am not here to discuss the reasons for that.

As for those to whom the media attributes the accusation of their relationship with the CIA, claiming it created them to destroy the Soviet Union, this is also false talk. For example, among the most famous individuals targeted by this accusation is:

- **Shaykh ʿAbdullāh ʿAzzām (may Allāh have mercy on him):**
  I knew him and frequented him often. I worked with him for a short period;

most of my work in those days was with Shaykh Usāmah (may Allāh protect him). Shaykh ʿAbdullāh's objective was concise, and he often spoke about it himself and recorded it in his tapes and lectures. It was:

1. To establish the Islāmic state in Afghanistan.
   And to launch geographically from there in a process of liberation to whatever lands Allāh willed, and primarily to Palestine and Jerusalem. He used to speak of conquering Moscow, Beijing, and Jerusalem from Afghanistan. These were his hopes and his disposition (may Allāh have mercy on him). As the poet said:

   Ambitions arise according to the determination of the resolute,
   And noble deeds come according to the generosity of the noble.
   Small things seem great in the eyes of the small,
   And great things seem small in the eyes of the great.
   The intelligent one suffers in comfort due to his intellect,
   While the ignorant one enjoys bliss in misery.

   And for those dwarves today who deny such hopes, especially those who attribute themselves to the Islāmic awakening, al-Mutanabbī—may Allāh reward him—the author of these verses, did not forget to add:

   And it is a calamity to advise one who does not heed,
   His error, and to address one who does not understand.

2. The "Militarization of Muslim Youth":
   This was the second objective of Shaykh ʿAbdullāh (may Allāh have

> mercy on him and honor his resting place). In short, it was to spread practical training—training and participation in combat. We ask Allāh to grant him the equivalent of all the rewards of the Arab Afghans, without diminishing their rewards in any way, Allāh willing, because the Shaykh was the founder, the educator, and the wronged one whose true worth and the worth of his legacy the Ummah has not recognized to this day, thanks to the beneficiaries among the leaders of the Islāmic awakening, and the efforts of the enemies of Islām who know the value of men like him and work to bury their traces (may Allāh have mercy on him).
>
> He used to say: "I want from every Arab country, even if only forty mujāhidīn, for half of them to be martyred and half to return to their country to carry the call of Jihād." And he (may Allāh have mercy on him) achieved more than he desired.
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> More than 40,000 non-Afghan Arab and Muslim youth came to Afghanistan. More than half of them received military training, and more than half of those trained participated in combat. The number of martyrs did not exceed much more than the percentage of zakāt on wealth (2.5%). They were (over eight years) about a thousand martyrs (may Allāh the Exalted have mercy on them).

This gathering had a historical role, some aspects of which I will mention after refuting this strange fabrication: the claim that the CIA and America manufactured the Arab Jihādī gathering in Afghanistan, which then turned against them.

Anyone who looks at the tapes, books, sermons, and legacy of the martyred Shaykh ʿAbdullāh ʿAzzām—Abū Muḥammad—(may Allāh have mercy on him) will see the vast area of sacred hatred and animosity towards America and its collaborators, and

towards apostates and their henchmen, that he cultivated in the hearts of his followers and readers. How could it be otherwise? He was one of their victims in Palestine, then Jordan, then Pakistan, where they killed him on American orders during the era of Benazir Bhutto and her interior minister, Naseerullah Babar, whose punishment remains a trust upon the necks of generations of mujāhidīn. May Allāh destroy the criminals and accept him among the martyrs.

As for his fatwā in his valuable book, *The Defense of Muslim Lands: The Most Important of Individual Obligations*, permitting the acceptance of aid from the Americans for Jihād against the aggressing Russians, or vice versa, this is correct. This pertains to a state of necessity to which Muslims resort when an assailant attacks them and they are on the brink of destruction. This is a well-known matter, assessed by jurists according to its specific conditions. The Sheikh issued a fatwā for the Afghans to accept aid from America, from apostate Arab rulers, and from others. However, the Arab Jihādī contingent was a giving, not a receiving, entity. Hundreds of millions of dollars in donations poured in from Muslims' obligatory alms and charitable contributions. The contingent took what it needed for Jihād expenses, preparation, and the support of the families of Arab mujāhidīn and martyrs, and spent most of the money on the Afghan Jihād itself. The Arab mujāhidīn also faithfully delivered endowments specifically designated for the Afghan Jihād to their rightful recipients among the mujāhidīn and emigrants, including orphans, widows, and the needy. This summarizes the role of Sheikh Abdullah Azzam.

Regarding Sheikh Osama bin Laden—may Allāh protect him:

He bore a greater share of this accusation, and the media pursued various lines of attack in leveling charges against him. Many books and studies by Arab and foreign Crusader writers have addressed him with this slander, going to great lengths. They spoke of close ties of the bin Laden family, petroleum trade between President Bush Sr. and one of Sheikh Osama's brothers, and bin Laden's work with Saudi

intelligence in Peshawar arranging the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan. The truth is that Saudi intelligence supervised Saudi contributions, and its elements became involved through Saudi Islamists due to the volume of aid coming from Saudi Arabia. Cooperation with official Saudi authorities was indeed ongoing. Media accusations and speculations speak of Saudi intelligence linking bin Laden to American intelligence. Some went even further, portraying him as an official, salaried CIA agent! They claimed he turned against them after they invaded Saudi Arabia and established a presence there following the so-called "Kuwait Liberation War," and that he did so in response to religious and national sentiments. Others went even further, considering him still an agent working for them, alleging he attacked New York for their benefit, whether he realized it or not. They suggested that American intelligence deliberately overlooked available information about the plot and did not prevent the attack, to provide America with a pretext to invade Arab and Muslim countries, destroy Afghanistan, and occupy Iraq. They cited as evidence the fact that he has not been found to date, implying this is deliberate. This is the extent of the deliberate and unintentional fictions, myths, and absurdities.

The reality is simpler than that and does not require all these complexities. If Allāh decrees and I address these events in a separate book, chronicling that period, I would write, if Allāh wills, what would suffice regarding the field realities of events I personally experienced and whose protagonists I lived alongside and worked with, or near, throughout the Jihādī current's trajectory, and still do, praise be to Allāh.

In brief, I say the following:

Sheikh Osama bin Laden—may Allāh relieve his distress and protect him—began his journey to Afghanistan shortly after the Russian occupation, initially providing financial donations. According to reliable sources who lived through that period, he decided to settle there and dedicate himself to field Jihād alongside the Afghans in early 1986. This was after Sheikh Abdullah Azzam established the Services Bureau

in 1984. Bin Laden worked with him for a time, then decided to become independent and founded the Al-Qāʿidah organization in early 1988, following an increase in the arrival of Arab mujāhidīn in Afghanistan, particularly from Saudi Arabia and Yemen—areas where he had connections and acquaintances.

His activities originating from Saudi Arabia were public and legitimate, not conflicting with the government's policies; in fact, they aligned with its American-backed orientation of supporting the Afghan Jihād. This situation continued until 1990, when the Kuwait War posed a Sharīʿah-based and doctrinal problem for all Arab Afghan mujāhidīn formations, including Al-Qāʿidah elements. Within Al-Qāʿidah, individuals from the Jihādī current in Egypt, Syria, and elsewhere undertook training, guidance, and ideological education, influencing its intellectual identity.

Sheikh Osama formed Al-Qāʿidah for Jihādī objectives both within and outside Afghanistan, aiming to support Jihād causes and their organizations in various places. He had his own Jihādī project in South Yemen against the former communist government. The aspirations of his project later expanded to encompass a unified Yemen. Thus, he was like other Jihādī organizations with their own specific projects. Hence, like other Arab Afghans, he used participation in the Afghan Jihād as a field for preparing and training elements for his project. Like others, he also worked towards the general goal of establishing an Islamic state in Afghanistan after its liberation.

I myself worked intermittently in military training at Al-Qāʿidah camps between early 1988 and 1991. I also lectured on methodology, Sharīʿah-based politics, and guerrilla warfare tactics in Al-Qāʿidah camps and other organizations' training facilities. I interacted with most of the founding structure and working cadres within the Arab Afghan Jihād framework. At that time, Al-Qāʿidah had no other field operations outside Afghanistan, and Sheikh Osama's only direct project was Yemen.

This was in addition to providing material support to Jihādī causes and groups in many places. This is based on my knowledge, which I believe was very close to the reality of the situation due to my proximity to the Sheikh at that time, as I was one of the first-tier members around him.

In 1991, I left Afghanistan, returning to my residence in Spain, and my practical contact with them ceased until 1996, when we met again under the hospitality of the Taliban.

Sheikh Osama, most of his administration, and his remaining cadres also left for Sudan, and they had not yet shown any other operational orientation.

The arena of Arab Jihād in Afghanistan during the Jihād against the Soviets was highly interconnected. Saudi Arabia, its relief organizations, and its intelligence and military agencies played a significant role. Many of their officials had direct working relationships with the Arab Jihād administration, headed by Sheikh Abdullah Azzam and Sheikh Osama. They and other leaders saw this as beneficial for supporting the Afghan Jihād, which concealed no secret that needed to be protected from individuals providing support from Saudi or Pakistani intelligence. However, those with private Jihādī projects held the opposite conviction. They did not have contact with these intelligence-linked individuals nor did they view them favorably. I belonged to this group, despite my proximity to Sheikh Osama's inner circle at that time, until 1991.

As for the claim that Americans trained Arab mujāhidīn from Al-Qāʿidah or other groups, or provided them with any support, it is merely a baseless lie. This would not have been acceptable, not even as a joke. The Arab Jihādī milieu, dominated by the concepts of loyalty and disavowal (al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ) and the Jihādī school advocating adherence to the practice of the early generations of Muslims, was tense even towards some Saudi government figures who came to offer support and

perhaps entered some guesthouses or open public camps—such as the Saudi military attaché, Abū Māzin. How then could such ideas about foreigners or Americans be entertained?

However, what I have not seen the media or books discussing Sheikh Mujāhid Osama bin Laden—may Allāh protect him—address, despite its importance in explaining what occurred during that period and afterwards, is the timing of the intellectual and methodological shift in Sheikh Osama, which was subsequently reflected in his and Al-Qāʿidah's stance and orientation against America.

Two primary factors caused this, in order of importance:

1. Sheikh Osama primarily built Al-Qāʿidah on the efforts of cadres from the Egyptian Jihād organization, along with some Jihādī current cadres from other regions who contributed to training. Most of them were not members of Al-Qāʿidah but collaborated on the basis of cooperation and mutual benefit. These Jihādīs—and I was among them for a period—disseminated their Jihādī ideas concerning loyalty and disavowal (al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ), God's sovereignty (al-ḥākimiyyah), and other matters of Sharīʿah-based politics and the understanding of contemporary reality (fiqh al-wāqiʿ) in those camps. Their methods went as far as training Saudis in target practice using pictures of King Fahd and senior Saudi princes. Over time, through their books, lectures, methods, and discussions, they influenced Al-Qāʿidah's youth base. This same influence eventually extended to Sheikh Osama, who had come to Afghanistan like most Saudi youth joining the Jihād at that time, carrying the methodology and imprints of the Islamic Awakening (al-Ṣaḥwah al-Islāmiyyah) ideology in Saudi Arabia. This ideology was a mixture of Muslim Brotherhood thought, Surūrī ideas, and the teachings of official advocates of the school of thought associated with Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhāb. I write this from my knowledge, due to my closeness to him during that period and

our numerous discussions on the matter. He and most Saudi mujāhidīn considered the Saudi government legitimate, and King Fahd and the House of Saud to be Muslims and legitimate rulers (ūlī al-amr), despite their corruption and injustices. They held deep respect for the official scholars in the Council of Senior Scholars and adhered to their fatwās. At that time, there were no common grounds between us as Jihādīs and those brothers—including Sheikh Osama himself, who held this ideology—except for the generally agreed-upon principles of Islām and the work to support the Afghan Jihād. However, the methodological contradictions and differences in Jihādī thought, understanding of reality, and the foundations of Sharīʿah-based politics were clear between us Jihādīs and them. What happened over time is that Sheikh Osama—may Allāh protect him—gradually became convinced of, assimilated, accepted, and then adopted Jihādī ideology, eventually becoming one of its symbols. I believe that, in addition to the influence and interaction between him and the Jihādīs, the second factor that contributed to this was:

2. The stance of Saudi Arabia, its ruling institutions, and its official scholars regarding the repercussions of the Kuwait War and the presence of American forces in Saudi Arabia. The ensuing transformations revealed to him the magnitude of the catastrophe, the significant role of ruling unbelief in the Arabian Peninsula, and the profound hypocrisy of official religious institutions. Due to his astuteness, perception of reality, and sharp intelligence, he understood the dimensions and objectives of the American presence in the region. His stay in Sudan (1992-1996) provided him with sufficient time for reflection. During this period, he shifted from a mild media opposition to the Al Saud government while still acknowledging its legitimacy (see his statements issued under the name of the Advice and Reformation Committee, statements 1-10), to strongly and seriously calling for reform by

directing harsh and severe discourse towards the ruling authority and its hypocritical official religious establishment. Refer to statements 11-17. I have included excerpts from these statements in Chapter Four, under the section: "The Saudi Religious Establishment and its Role in Supporting the Third Crusader Campaigns." See also the author's book, *Testimony of the Leaders of Jihād and Reform in the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries*.

Then, the Americans began pressuring Sudan to expel Sheikh Osama, after their interests started facing some attacks from certain Saudi Jihādī youth who had assimilated Jihādī ideology in Afghanistan and moved to practical application. These youth, such as those who bombed the American residential compound in Olaya, Riyadh, or carried out other limited operations, had no significant operational connection to Sheikh Osama or Al-Qāʿidah. The Americans and the Saudi government knew this. When Sudan expelled Sheikh Osama and he returned to Afghanistan under Taliban rule in 1996, he was surrounded by a group of individuals who held the ideology of international confrontation with America and its allies. Through his personal reflection, influenced by the Jihādī current's methodology, and his understanding of reality, Sheikh Osama had concluded that the path to Jihād against apostate regimes, including the one in Saudi Arabia, inevitably involved confronting America. With Allāh's guidance, he arrived at the correct political equation: (1) The scholars bestow legitimacy upon the Al Saud. (2) And the Al Saud bestow legitimacy upon America's presence in the Peninsula.

There were two ways to confront Al Saud and this situation:

1. Either confront Al Saud, which would necessitate confronting the scholars to expose their hypocrisy and thereby delegitimize Al Saud—a losing battle in public perception, given the size and influence of the religious establishment

and the legitimacy and awe it had instilled in people's minds over more than seventy years.

2. Or a safer path: strike the American presence. This would compel Al Saud to defend it, causing their legitimacy to fall in the eyes of Muslims in the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries. The religious establishment would then defend them, and its legitimacy would fall along with theirs. The battle would then unfold with greater clarity before the people.

Sheikh Osama chose the second option, and I believe he was largely correct. Those who understand the religious, social, and political conditions and components in Saudi Arabia can appreciate this.

Sheikh Osama had also become convinced after the lesson of the Soviet Union's collapse. He saw how all dictatorial governments in the Warsaw Pact countries fell with it, as happened in East Germany, Romania, Poland, and elsewhere. He became convinced that with America's fall, all components of the existing Arab order, and other such orders in the Islamic world, would also collapse. For these reasons, he became convinced of focusing efforts on Jihād against America. He began to advocate to those around him the idea of war with the "head of the snake," as he called it, rather than its many tails.

I visited him in Afghanistan about four or five months after his arrival there in late 1996 to conduct an interview for a BBC documentary on the Saudi opposition. Similarly, a few months later, in May 1997, I interviewed him for a CNN television broadcast. At the time, I had established a media and studies center in London specializing in conflicts in the Islamic world. In the course of that work, I sat with him several times, and this, in brief, was his conviction.

When I returned to reside permanently in Afghanistan under the Taliban, a little over a year later, I had numerous opportunities over the four years we lived under

the Emirate to pay fraternal visits to him and to several of my other friends working with him. What I have mentioned was the essence of his call to all who visited him, Arabs and non-Arabs, from the leaders and youth of the Awakening.

I believe that the idea he chose—Jihād against the Americans as the key to solving all problems in the Arabian Peninsula and the entire region—was correct, regardless of my opinion on the details of his methods and his organization's performance in achieving those goals at that time.

Then Sheikh Osama—may Allāh protect him—became more deeply entrenched in this conviction, gathering justifications for this battle and choosing the necessary tactics according to his perspectives.

Thus, the claim by those who slander him, alleging he worked with the Americans during the Jihād against the Russians and then turned against them, is a false assertion. It is based on malice, hatred, or ignorance, fueled by the propaganda of hostile media.

The story, in short, is that he and all Muslims at that time shared a common interest with the Americans in striking the Russians for their aggression against Afghanistan. When the battle ended, everyone realized that the next enemy was the sole power that had unilaterally taken control of world affairs, established the new world order, invaded the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries, and begun preparing Crusader campaigns against the Middle East. So, bin Laden fulfilled his duty and, in turn, declared Jihād against the power that had itself become an aggressor. Most of those who wished to wage Jihād with him, or independently of him, as was my situation and that of others like me, did likewise.

To make the picture clear: for example, if the French or other Europeans, or the Russians, or China were to help us today in our Jihād against America—as I think they might one day—there would be a common interest between us. If we were

victorious over America, and they, in turn, invaded our lands—as I believe they would if they took the prior step—we would shift the Jihād against them. If we found them inclined towards peace, beneficial cooperation, and good neighborliness, they would find that our religion has the capacity for us to reciprocate. However, I believe they would only do so as part of tactical, interim measures.

Although I feel I have elaborated at length in refuting these two allegations, it is because I have found the media, whether deliberately or out of ignorance, disseminating these slanders in a manner extremely harmful to the mujāhidīn and Muslims. I believe there is benefit in this presentation, as a living testimony, for those who seek the truth.

Just as I concluded the section on Sheikh Abdullah Azzam—may Allāh have mercy on him—with beautiful verses by al-Mutanabbī, I see it fitting to also conclude with what befits Sheikh Osama's current orientation towards war with America, using other beautiful verses by the same "Sultan of Poets." I see in Sheikh Osama's choice of battle against America, the head of unbelief and tyranny, a reflection of what al-Mutanabbī said in his verses:

If you venture for a noble, sought-after aim, be not content with less than the stars.
For the taste of death in a trivial matter is like the taste of death in a great one.
The cowardly believe that inaction is wisdom; that is the deceit of a base nature.
How many criticize a sound statement, their flaw being a deficient understanding.
Every virtue in a man is hoped for, but nothing compares to courage in the wise.

May Allāh have mercy on Sheikh Abdullah Azzam among those who have fulfilled their vow, and may Allāh protect Sheikh Osama. May He make us and him among those who await, having not altered their commitment in the least. May He forgive them, us, and all Muslims.

After this digression, which I hope is beneficial, I return to the topic of the section, which is:

The Impact of the Afghan Jihād (1984-1992) on the Contemporary Jihādī Current: Methodologically and Operationally

Peshawar, the border city, warm in winter and scorching in summer, which Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi—may Allāh have mercy on him—had taken as his winter capital during his glorious campaigns in the conquests of India in the fourth century Hijrī, transformed into a veritable university for almost all schools, currents, organizations, and groups of the Arab and Islamic Awakening. During the flourishing years of that gathering, between 1986 and 1992, it became an arena for the confluence of all ideas, methodologies, and propositions that prevailed in the Islamic Awakening—proselytizing, reformist, political, and Jihādī, and even ideologically deviant factions. Hundreds of Arab, Islamic, and foreign humanitarian charitable institutions flocked there, ostensibly for various purposes under the guise of providing services to more than three million Afghan refugees who poured into Pakistan. Perhaps more than two million of them settled in and around Peshawar. During that period, hundreds of Islamic personalities visited Peshawar: scholars, sheikhs, writers, poets, symbols, and leaders of movements, to offer some effort, or to observe, for publicity, for ostentation and reputation, for gain, or for any other intention, good or bad.

From Peshawar, financial, material, military, and other forms of aid flowed across the Afghan border, finding its way, for better or worse, to its intended or unintended destinations.

The Afghan Jihād and the role of Arabs in it is a matter worthy of historical documentation, analysis, and learning. It is a subject that requires separate books.

However, I am here concerned with the impact of that gathering on the contemporary Arab Jihādī current.

A few individuals, perhaps not exceeding ten, had headed to Pakistan to support the Afghan mujāhidīn shortly after the declared Russian invasion between 1979 and 1982. Three or four of them actually entered Afghanistan to participate in the Jihād. Some individual Muslim benefactors also arrived during that period to provide some material aid to the Afghan mujāhidīn.

However, the history of the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan practically begins in 1984, when Sheikh Abdullah Azzam fully dedicated himself to the Afghan Jihād in the field. He had previously worked as a lecturer at the Faculty of Sharīʿah in the Islamic University in Islamabad. According to what I heard from some witnesses of that period, he had left Jordan due to harassment by the authorities in Amman.

Sheikh Abdullah Azzam worked on several fronts to support the Afghan Jihād, the most important of which were:

1. Establishing the Services Bureau (Maktab al-Khidmāt), which undertook the provision and transfer of aid and donations to Afghan mujāhidīn and emigrants.
2. Founding *Al-Jihād Magazine*, which was his main platform for propagating the Afghan Jihād.
3. Establishing the Sada camp near the Afghan border, within Pakistani territory in the tribal areas, to train the Arab youth whose vanguards began arriving in small numbers since 1984.
4. Undertaking promotional journeys and trips during which he delivered dozens of sermons in several countries to mobilize support for the Afghan Jihād, urging youth to travel there, benefit from it, and perform the obligation of Jihād. The first of his books was *Verses of the Merciful in the Afghan Jihād*

> (Āyāt al-Raḥmān fī Jihād al-Afghān), which gained wide fame and also widespread controversy. Then came the book *The Defense of Muslim Lands: The Most Important of Individual Obligations* (Al-Difāʿ ʿan Arāḍī al-Muslimīn Ahamm Furūḍ al-Aʿyān). In it, he issued a fatwā making it an individual obligation for all Muslims without valid excuse to go for Jihād in Afghanistan. He managed to obtain more than eighty signatures from senior scholars and preachers in the Islamic world, headed by senior scholars in Saudi Arabia, chief among them Sheikh Ibn Baz, as well as from some Azhar sheikhs and some prominent scholars and preachers of the Muslim Brotherhood from various countries, in addition to some scholars from Pakistan and elsewhere. This book and that fatwā played an important role, along with *Al-Jihād Magazine*, whose standard quickly improved, becoming an illustrated magazine that conveyed vivid images of the Jihād and suffering in Afghanistan. It soon had distribution offices in Europe, America, and some Arab countries. All of this played a prominent role in the process of incitement.

I have heard in some of Sheikh Abdullah Azzam's tapes that the number of youth who remained steadfast with him in the Sada camp in 1984 reached twelve mujāhidīn, and this number only doubled during 1985 to reach twenty-five mujāhidīn. By mid-1986, it reached just under two hundred mujāhidīn of various nationalities, perhaps most of them from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Palestine.

At the end of 1985 or early 1986, Sheikh Osama bin Laden arrived—according to what I was told—to participate personally in the field Jihād, after his previous visits had been for providing material support.

In cooperation with some cadres from the Egyptian Jihād organization, who were among the first to come to Afghanistan, Sheikh Osama opened an advanced military center at one of the important supply crossings for the mujāhidīn in the rugged,

forested mountainous region of Jaji. Allāh decreed that the Russians would launch a major offensive to close that crossing in Ramadan 1986. The group of youth who were with Sheikh Osama and Sheikh Abdullah Azzam participated in that fierce battle, which lasted about a month. The Afghan mujāhidīn achieved a sweeping victory over the Russian forces, including commando vanguards airlifted into the area. That small band of Arab mujāhidīn played a prominent role in that battle. The extensive publicity campaign conducted by Sheikh Abdullah Azzam through his media outlets, as well as the important promotional tour undertaken by Sheikh Osama in Saudi Arabia, led to the influx of Arab mujāhidīn in large numbers, reaching several thousand by early 1987, most of whom were from Saudi Arabia and Yemen. From there, it practically began, as the numbers increased, reaching their peak in late 1989-1990, exceeding forty thousand Arab and Muslim mujāhidīn from all countries of the Islamic world.

The Jihādī movement in Egypt, and its two main wings, the Islamic Group (al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah) and the Jihād Group (Jamāʿat al-Jihād), had entered into conflict with the government of Hosni Mubarak, Sadat's successor, following Sadat's assassination in 1981. Many of its most prominent leaders and numerous members were forced to leave Egypt under pressure from security campaigns in neighboring countries. With the flourishing news of the Afghan Jihād, many of them began to head to Peshawar. Similarly, the Jihādī revolution that erupted in Syria between 1975 and 1982 had been practically destroyed. Those of its elements who remained were scattered across the earth. A very limited number of them also turned towards Afghanistan and settled in Peshawar; I and some of my close friends were among these, and all praise and grace are due to Allāh. Some Jihādī cadres from Palestine, who were students and friends of Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, had also joined him. Individual Jihādī and military cadres from various places began to head to that attractive arena, which was under the spotlight of all publicity. In 1986, following a Jihādī attempt that ended with its suppression by the Libyan government, some

Jihādī cadres also went there. The civil war in Lebanon had ended, and Sunni Islamic movements in northern Lebanon had suffered security blows at the hands of Syrian intelligence, so some of them also migrated to that arena. Some brothers from the Islamists of Iraqi Kurdistan also came. This was the beginning of the gathering of cadres from the Arab Jihādī current, forming the first nucleus of Jihādīs within the Arab mujāhidīn assembly in Afghanistan, which was rapidly expanding.

The intellectual and methodological presence of the Egyptian Jihād organization was prominent and distinctive in the Arab arena, as was the presence of the Islamic Group of Egypt. Regardless of the known differences in the methodology of the two groups, they played an influential role, especially in the common aspects of their Jihādī ideas. The presence of some students of knowledge, some Salafī preachers, and some Surūrīs from Saudi Arabia and elsewhere also played a role in promoting the ideology of God's sovereignty (al-ḥākimiyyah), loyalty and disavowal (al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ), and the generalities of Jihādī thought in Arab circles, and even among non-Arabs who came to the Afghan Jihād. The presence of some of the heritage of the Jihādī experience in Syria in the arena—including my book on the history and lessons of our experience, praise be to Allāh—also played an intellectual role that contributed to the ideological engagement of the Jihādī current, which began to leave its mark on the Arab gathering. Since the presence of other schools of the Islamic Awakening was also strong in the arena, through their control over medical and educational institutions and their work in other relief fields—especially traditional Salafīs, the Muslim Brotherhood, and similar organizations, as well as the Tablighi Jamaat and others—in addition to the significant presence of Saudi governmental and semi-governmental Islamic institutions and the imprints they brought with them.

The official religious establishment also brought all their books, publications, magazines, lectures, and their intellectual and proselytizing heritage. Given that the

late seventies and early eighties were a period of brilliance and interaction between the schools of the Islamic Awakening, Peshawar, its guesthouses, training camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and its gatherings became centers for communication, dialogue, intellectual contact, and often conflict between these various propositions. Thus, the Jihādī current, and those who represented it in the Arab Jihād arena in Peshawar and the Afghan camps, found themselves clashing with two main fronts:

- The front of the Muslim Brotherhood and democratic political thought, whose proponents promoted it through research, studies, and lectures they organized, even in some camps where they could operate.
- The front of the official Saudi school of jurisprudence, which called for rejecting the ideology of God's sovereignty (al-ḥākimiyyah) and for considering rulers as legitimate authorities (ūlī al-amr). It also called for respecting official scholars, especially in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, which is known as the Jāmī school, and later the Madkhalī school.

Gradually, considering the Jihādī atmosphere on the one hand, and the brilliance and breadth of Jihādī thought on the other, as well as the clarity of truth and the prevalence of the methodology of following evidence, Jihādī thought began to dominate the Arab gathering's arena. It started to win over the majority of the arena, as thousands of youth coming from most countries of the Islamic world became convinced of Jihādī ideology. A new Jihādī school within the Jihādī current began to crystallize and integrate, the sum of whose components later became known as the "Arab Afghans" phenomenon.

The fusion of Salafī jurisprudence and creed with Qutbist Muslim Brotherhood activist thought—to which I referred earlier—had begun to ferment in Egypt during the seventies and early eighties. The book *The Neglected Obligation* (Al-Farīḍah al-Ghāʾibah), written by the martyr Abd al-Salām Faraj of the Islamic Group, who participated in Sadat's assassination and was subsequently executed—may Allāh

have mercy on him and reward him and his brothers well on behalf of Muslims—played an important role. Despite its simple content, style, and small size, the significant new addition it made to Jihādī thought was the presentation of Ibn Taymiyyah's fatwās concerning the Tatar rulers who governed Muslim lands, including Syria, when they invaded and claimed to be Muslims, despite changing the Sharīʿah and ruling by other than what Allāh revealed. It also raised the issue of comparing contemporary Muslim rulers, their aides, and soldiers with those Tatars, and the scholars' fatwās on their unbelief and the obligation to fight them, along with those who fought with them, including the ignorant and coerced among them. It applied these rulings to the reality of Arab governments in Muslim countries, and to their police, intelligence, and security personnel. These comparisons addressed major problems and provided answers to pressing questions posed by Jihād against the government and its auxiliaries.

The Jihād Group had other works carrying the same foundations of that ideology, and these books were printed and distributed in Peshawar. The intellectual clash between Islamic democratic thought, adopted by the Muslim Brotherhood and similar groups, and Salafī thought—before the democratic contagion spread to it—was also intense in the general Awakening arena, and it likewise moved to its most important arena at that time, in that gathering.

The Egyptian Jihād Group issued a number of important research papers, culminating in the valuable book *The Mainstay in Preparing the Equipment* (Al-ʿUmdah fī Iʿdād al-ʿUddah) by its sheikh, Abd al-Qādir ibn Abd al-Azīz—may Allāh release him. This book was perhaps one of the most important books of the "Arab Afghans." It filled a major educational gap in the Arab camps at the time and remained one of the most important books of the Jihādī current. In the context of Jihādī activity in writing and publishing, my book *The Islamic Jihādī Revolution in Syria: Pains and Hopes* (Al-Thawrah al-Islāmiyyah al-Jihādiyyah fī Sūriyā: Ālām wa

Āmāl), which I completed in 1987, was printed in Peshawar in 1990. This book conveyed to the Arab Afghan circles the summary of the history and lessons of the longest and most important contemporary Jihādī experiences against apostate governments.

Sheikh Abū Ḥudhayfah al-Miṣrī, one of the cadres of the Jihād Group—may Allāh relieve his distress—opened the Al-Noor Media Center in Peshawar, where a number of Jihādī preachers and lecturers organized a series of lessons, lectures, and Friday sermons.

Some emerging Jihādī gatherings began to contribute, and many intellectual, methodological, and educational courses were held. Veteran cadres of the Jihādī current were attracted to teach and lecture. Then, these gatherings became self-sufficient with their own cadres and began to crystallize and produce.

It became evident with this intellectual ferment, collision, and friction between the various intellectual currents constituting the spectrum of the Islamic Awakening that activist Jihādī thought, mixed with the new Salafī influences I mentioned earlier, had begun to dominate the arena and sweep the bases of thousands of Arab youth who came to the Afghan Jihād. This was despite the fact that the majority of them did not join the dozens of old and new Jihādī organizations, which had their guesthouses and camps in Pakistan and the border areas of Afghanistan, and had formed structures, administrations, cadres, and emirs. Many of them were busy on the sidelines of the Afghan Jihād, in a phase of preparation and diligent activity to carry the torch of Jihād and revolution to the countries from which they came. This was from Allāh's generosity, which those who planned to open the doors of facilitation for these masses to serve their grand objectives had not anticipated.

These intellectual fermentations were not devoid of the birth of some deviant phenomena, such as some takfīrī (excommunicating) and extremist offshoots. These

resulted from the revolutionary interactions of Jihādī thought and the atmosphere of enthusiasm, alongside the presence of political schools and their excessively fluid democratic propositions in that arena. This occurred in an atmosphere where the circumstances of the new world order imposed major issues on the Arab and Islamic world, such as the overt American presence in the Gulf after its covert presence, the plague of normalization with the Jews and peace treaties, and the intellectual, cultural, political, and social invasion of the features of the new world order. These great calamities created positions to defend them among the scholars of the sultans and some leaders of the Awakening itself. This, in turn, caused reactions among a few young people who lacked neither enthusiasm nor, unfortunately, knowledge. However, this remained within limited frameworks.

But importantly, in that atmosphere, the experience of veteran Jihādīs matured, and nuclei of new Jihādī organizations were formed from countries where such organizations had not yet crystallized, such as Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon, as well as from some Islamic countries like the Philippines, Indonesia, Turkey, and others.

In short, it can be said that a distinct Jihādī generation—intellectually, methodologically, and operationally—was born there, in the atmosphere of the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan. They were given the beautiful and expressive name "Arab Afghans." What distinguished them, beyond their clarity of methodology and soundness of creed, was that they derived their zeal for Jihād from their faith in Allāh's company and their conviction in their ability to topple superpowers. They no longer feared them, nor, naturally, did they fear the lesser, subservient powers ruling in our countries. This was one of the most beautiful fruits of that great historical victory. Indeed, it is fitting for those to whom Allāh granted the honor of that presence to say what the Arab poet said about the Day of Dhū Qār, the day of Arab glory after long humiliation before the superpowers of that time: *"Had every*

Ma'add participated with us on the Day of Dhū Qār, honor would not have eluded them." So, we can say: *"Had every monotheist participated with us on the Day of Afghan, honor would not have eluded them."* For we, with our Afghan brothers, brought down the Soviet Union, the leader of the Eastern Bloc. And I believe that our followers, and those of us whose lives are extended, along with whomever Allāh wills of His servants, will bring down America, the leader of the new Western Crusader Bloc, if Allāh Almighty wills. And that is the grace of Allāh, which He bestows upon whom He wills.

Fifth: The Jihādī Current and the Phase of Havens and Dispersion (1991-1996)

While the Afghan mujāhidīn were knocking on the gates of Kabul and major cities began to fall into their hands, the American-Western plan for Afghanistan took two directions concerning that arena: one Afghan, the other Arab.

In the Afghan direction, the program of the Americans and their allies, chiefly the government of Pakistan, was to prevent the establishment of a mujāhidīn government that would declare an Islamic state, rule by Sharīʿah, and undertake the reconstruction of Afghanistan. The planned program was to instigate a phase of civil war that would consume the strategic stockpile of weapons and hundreds of thousands of fighting cadres from the leaders and members of Jihādī organizations in Afghanistan. This is what they implemented during 1992-1996.

As for what concerns us in this research, their efforts were focused on dismantling the Arab Jihādī gathering, dispersing it, and pursuing its elements and cadres in their home countries and around the world. Thus, the Jihādī current entered a new phase that lasted from 1992 to 1996, which can be called the "phase of dispersion and temporary safe havens."

Those thousands of mujāhidīn mostly returned to their countries. Instead of being welcomed as heroes and mujāhidīn who had worked towards the common goal of those allies—from America down to its subservient governments that had facilitated and supported their Jihād—those young men found themselves strangers in their own homelands, which opened for them the doors of detention centers, interrogation sessions, and prisons for indefinite periods, and leveled accusations against them. Only some countries, which did not treat these mujāhidīn in this heinous manner, were exceptions. This generated various reactions and pushed some segments of Jihādīs into counter-productive practices. Furthermore, the return of these Jihādī segments to their countries from an atmosphere of honor, dignity, Jihād, and bearing arms, to clash in their homelands—after having aspired to those lofty meanings—with a reality that can, at best, be described as distant from Allāh's Sharīʿah and lost in an atmosphere of servility, betrayal, and humiliation. Consequently, numerous attempts were made to form secret organizations that entered phases of preparation for confrontation with their governments, hoping to overthrow them and establish legitimate Islamic governments. However, all these attempts collided with an extremely difficult reality, disproportionate to the goals they aspired to. They entered into confrontations with the security services in their countries, which ultimately led to their destruction and the dispersal of their elements, and to an escalation of the security confrontation between Jihādī and Islamic movements in those countries and their misguided, renegade governments.

Among the most important of these attempts following the Afghan Jihād was the establishment of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) by some Arab Afghans from Algeria in cooperation with local Jihādī currents, following the overthrow of the historic achievement of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) through a military coup in 1991. Similarly, there was the attempt by the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) in Libya in 1994. These were the most extensive attempts in that phase, in addition to

some limited attempts, as occurred in Yemen, Lebanon, and elsewhere, some details of which concerning the most important Jihādī attempts of this era we will address in a subsequent section within this chapter, if Allāh wills.

There is another group of Arab Afghans: veteran Jihādīs who had originally left their countries due to security problems and were wanted by their governments either before or during the Afghan Jihād. Most of these were from previous Jihādī organizations, such as some members of the Jihād Organization and the Islamic Group from Egypt, and some Jihādīs from Syria, Libya, and Tunisia, along with limited numbers from other nationalities.

These individuals were unable to return to their countries, unlike the thousands of Arab Afghans from countries like Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, Yemen, Mauritania, Jordan, and others. These security fugitives dispersed to various safe havens, utilizing some of the remaining political margins and security gaps before the global anti-terrorism policy solidified after the establishment of the new world order. Among the most important of these havens were:

1. **Europe and Western Countries:** This was through opportunities for political asylum. The most important of these countries was Britain, which attracted a large bloc comprising key cadres of Arab Afghans and the Jihādī current from various nationalities, followed by the Scandinavian countries, then the rest of Western and some Eastern European countries, Australia, and Canada.
2. **Sudan:** The government of al-Bashir and his ally al-Turabi had seized power, bringing the main Islamic movement there to authority. Their policy during 1991-1995 was to open the door for Jihādī organizations to move to Sudan. An important number of Jihādīs relocated there, led by the leadership of the Jihād Organization and the Islamic Group in Egypt, Sheikh Osama and the

leaders of Al-Qāʿidah, in addition to the main bloc of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group leadership, and Jihādīs of other nationalities.

3. **Other Countries:** These did not pose a security risk to citizens of other Arab countries who were Jihādīs, even if they were wanted in their own countries at the time, before Arab, regional, and international security coordination was tightened later. The most important of these countries were Yemen, which attracted a diverse group of Jihādīs and Arab Afghans of various nationalities; then Turkey, and also Syria, which sheltered a segment of young mujāhidīn from North African countries and Libya. This was primarily the case, while individual Jihādīs, with their families and children, spread to other places, with some of these expatriate fugitives, fleeing with their religion and clinging to hot coals in this era, reaching the farthest corners of the globe—from the Philippines to Indonesia, to Thailand, to South America, even to some remote parts of Africa.
4. **Bosnia and Chechnya:** The closure of Jihād fronts in Afghanistan coincided with the eruption of Jihād in Bosnia between 1993 and 1995, while Muslims were being subjected to massacres by Serbs and Croats. This created a new Jihādī arena that attracted thousands of young mujāhidīn from Arab and some Islamic countries. Among their vanguards were some Jihādīs who left the Afghan arena to join the Bosnian one. Likewise, some Arab Afghans, led by the martyred commander Khattab and some of his Arab Afghan comrades, went to Chechnya to establish a Jihādī nucleus that carried the torch of Jihād and added shining pages to the Jihādīs' record in the last quarter of the twentieth century, supplementing those glorious pages witnessed in different regions before that.

The years 1992-1995 were relatively comfortable for these displaced expatriates. These four years enabled Jihādīs scattered across the world to work on spreading Jihādī ideology and its call. Although many shortcomings can be mentioned

regarding the experiences of this phase, some of which I will address at the end of this chapter, if Allāh wills, these were years of propagation and expansion.

Although America had practically ignited anti-terrorism campaigns since 1990, which escalated over time to reach their peak since December 2001, these campaigns did not enter a phase of severity until late 1995 in practice. At that point, America, as part of its counter-terrorism program (as discussed in Chapter Five), included a plan to eliminate safe havens, in addition to other security practices.

Among the most important segments that worked positively in spreading Jihādī thought and its call were those concentrated in the West, especially Europe, foremost among them the Scandinavian countries and Britain. Jihādīs, exploiting the relatively comfortable conditions, financial capabilities, and margin of freedom—before it was closed off—that were available in those countries, worked on issuing newsletters and research, rebroadcasting what had been produced during the Afghan Jihād phase or throughout previous Jihādī experiences. They held seminars and lectures, frequented mosques, and interacted with Muslim communities that were witnessing an Islamic awakening no less, and perhaps more, flourishing than that occurring in the Arab and Islamic world. Some Arab governments even protested and complained about the freedom enjoyed by Islamists and Jihādīs there, and dozens of conferences were held to combat the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism in its various fields, including that margin in Western countries, until they managed to practically shut all of it down between 1995 and 2000.

I personally witnessed a unique experience of Jihādī propagation during my stay in Britain (1994-1997). Through that atmosphere, as an example, I was able to write for several Jihādī newsletters and magazines published in Britain, such as *Al-Fajr* (The Dawn), issued by the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group; *Al-Mujāhidūn* (The Mujāhidīn), issued by the Jihād Group in Egypt; and *Al-Anṣār* (The Supporters), which was close at that time to the Islamic Group and the Armed Islamic Group in

Algeria before the latter deviated from the right path. London witnessed many seminars, lessons, and meetings that were recorded and disseminated to various countries around the world where the Jihādī awakening was spreading.

This continued until the omens of security storms began to blow over those havens one after another. Waves of restrictions, then arrests or deportations and expulsions, began to affect all the aforementioned havens without exception. Some reference to this was made in Chapter Five. Sudan and Yemen expelled those within their borders. Turkey, Syria, and Jordan arrested those they could reach and handed them over to their home countries. All European countries, without exception, began the season with restrictions and ended by throwing hundreds of Jihādīs into their prisons, where many of them remain to this day under administrative detention without trial or law, their situation similar to that of their brothers detained by police and dictatorial regimes in the Arab and Islamic world and Third World countries.

Thus, Jihādīs entered a new phase of ordeal in which they needed a new haven and outlet, and that outlet was what Allāh Almighty facilitated in Afghanistan for a second time.

Sixth: The Second Round for Arab Afghans under the Taliban in Afghanistan (1996-2001)

This title is for one of the most important chapters in the history of the contemporary Islamic and Jihādī Awakening, representing its most delicate and dangerous phase. It is the subject of a separate book I intend to write, if Allāh wills, immediately after finishing this current book. I feel a historical responsibility and a great trust, being one of the few remaining living witnesses who can write this living testimony about those great experiences and their protagonists, and convey those precious lessons to the generations after us, especially those determined to carry

the banner of Jihād and the trust of calling to Allāh, in a time of arrogant falsehood and the displacement of the people of truth.

However, in this brief account, I will address the most prominent effects of this phase on the contemporary Jihādī current, whose stages we are reviewing in this chapter, omitting many highly important details for fear of excessive length and of raising sensitivities that would require elaboration and explanation beyond the scope of this book.

The summary of this is in concise key points as follows:

- The Taliban emerged from Kandahar province in southeastern Afghanistan in late 1993. They managed to advance and quickly gain control over central, southern, and eastern Afghanistan, subsequently entering Kabul in 1996, declaring the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, and proclaiming their leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar—may Allāh protect him—as the Commander of the Faithful therein. (I have written a separate study on the emergence of the Taliban and their trajectory during the period 1993-1998, titled *Afghanistan, the Taliban, and the Battle of Islām Today*, for those who wish for more detail).
- The persecuted and displaced cadres and members of the Jihādī current soon found a safe, and perhaps mandatory, haven in Afghanistan as the campaigns of pursuit, or what was called the "international war on terror" led by America, intensified after its launch in the early nineties and escalated post-1995. These individuals began to infiltrate Afghanistan individually and in groups, initiating the Arabs' second round in Afghanistan in the latter half of 1996.
- With the welcome and good neighborliness shown by the Taliban to these arriving vanguards, foremost among them Sheikh Osama and a group of Al-Qāʿidah elements, along with some symbols and Jihādīs from the veteran Arab

Afghans, the arena began to attract Jihādīs in general and those aspiring to resume their path there.

- With the declaration of the application of Sharīʿah and the Taliban's control over about 94% of Afghan territory, the nascent and sole Abode of Islām (Dār al-Islām) on earth, from the perspective of Jihādīs and Islamists in general, began to attract many who were not persecuted or forced to seek havens, but rather desired legitimate emigration to this new Abode of Islām.
- By 2000, Arab camps and guesthouses had spread in major Afghan cities, especially the capital Kabul, the Taliban's spiritual capital Kandahar, and eastern cities like Khost and Jalalabad. New emigrants and old warriors from the Arab Afghans launched a media and communications campaign to receive more emigrants. The influx of arrivals became active despite the political and economic siege and the international media campaign that surrounded the nascent Islamic Emirate from all sides. I believe the number of men who came and left Afghanistan during this phase (1996-2001) reached several thousand. However, those who settled in Afghanistan numbered close to 350 families and about 1,400 Arab mujāhidīn and emigrants of various nationalities, in addition to several hundred heads of families, mujāhidīn, and emigrants from Central Asia, especially from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, where Islamic movements face the tyranny of the last bastions of communism in the world, as well as from East Turkestan, which is occupied by China and where Muslims suffer various forms of torment and humiliation.
- Within this atmosphere, the main Arab Jihādī organizations were present. The hopes of their old leaderships were revived to resume their path of preparation and building, and to pursue their old objectives of reviving Jihād in their home countries against the tyrants of those lands, in order to establish Islamic governments on their ruins according to their conceptions.

- I am here only to record a summary of the history of that path, not to evaluate these masses and blocs, their objectives, and their methods of operation in this brief space. I will leave that general detail to the book I referred to, and I ask Allāh for help and success in completing it in a way that pleases Him.

New masses and blocs also arrived from various Arab countries, seeking to establish themselves. New Jihādī blocs and quasi-organizations were born, whose proponents tried to carve out their path through those circumstances.

It can be said that all who were present during this period can be considered Jihādīs, although the majority were not part of the main organizations. Afghanistan in this phase, unlike the first, did not attract other types from the spectrum of the Islamic Awakening, as international conditions towards this phenomenon had changed and become the opposite. While the first gathering grew amidst global blessing, support, and authorization—as I mentioned earlier—this gathering, its land, its rulers, and those who migrated to it, were subject to global war and pursuit.

Although the vast majority, if not all of them, were Jihādīs in thought and orientation, they can be classified into the following main formations, regardless here of tracking numbers or engaging in evaluation. This gathering included the following spectrum, by size:

1. **Trainees:** Those who came to receive training and then leave. These stayed only for the duration of the training, which ranged from a few months to a year.
2. **Emigrants (Muhājirūn):** Those who came with their families or by themselves for the purpose of emigration and settlement in the nascent Abode of Islām, to build it and wage Jihād with it, without having Jihādī objectives outside Afghanistan, nor against their home governments, nor against other internal or external enemies.

3. **Jihādī Organizations:** Those who came to pursue their old objectives and programs related to Jihād in their home countries, and to continue building their organizations anew in the traditional old manner of (regional-secret-hierarchical) organizations, whether from Arab or some Islamic countries.
4. **Sheikh Osama bin Laden and the Al-Qāʿidah Organization's leadership:** And those who followed their call, whose goal was to advocate and work towards confronting the United States of America from this impregnable fortress (Afghanistan), seeking protection under its new government (the Taliban) and its steadfast Emir (Mullah Muhammad Omar)—may Allāh relieve his distress.
5. **Organizations and Groups of Non-Arab Central Asians:** Their objectives varied between emigration, supporting the Abode of Islām and waging Jihād with it, and preparing for Jihād in their home countries. The most important and largest of these groups were the mujāhidīn from Uzbekistan and the mujāhidīn from East Turkestan, occupied by China, in addition to some other groups.
6. **Mujāhidīn from Pakistan:** They were a mixture of students of scholars and religious schools in Pakistan, an extension of the Taliban in thought and methodology, in addition to members of various Jihādī organizations operating on the Kashmir front, who saw Afghanistan as a good rear preparation line to continue their activities. This was in addition to individual mujāhidīn not affiliated with groups and organizations. Due to proximity and intertwining with the Afghan issue, the Pakistani presence constituted a volume equal to or greater than the total volume of the types mentioned above.

This period constituted an advanced stage in the growth and development of the Jihādī current in a new dimension.

The media campaigns launched by Sheikh Osama bin Laden against America and its aggression against Muslims, and his calls to liberate the Two Holy Sanctuaries from American and Western occupation, then his introduction of a new dimension to his call, namely the adoption of the Palestinian cause, linking American aggression against Muslims worldwide to the Israeli Zionist aggression against Muslims in Palestine, and incorporating the issue of the third holy sanctuary in Jerusalem and its Al-Aqsa Mosque into the issue of the Two Holy Sanctuaries—these focused and organized campaigns, and the enormous reactions from American media to this campaign, and the entry of these directives into American, global, and Arab satellite channels, especially Qatar's Al Jazeera, which played a pivotal role in conveying this media conflict to hundreds of millions of Muslim viewers worldwide—led the Jihādī current to take on a new dimension towards global engagement. This was despite the fact that most, if not all, Arab organizations did not change any of their (regional-secret-hierarchical) objectives or programs, nor did they shift towards Sheikh Osama's call until the final moments of 2001, when America forcibly pushed them in this direction.

This phase coincided with global events of great importance and impact on the Islamic world. Foremost among these was the eruption of the Palestinian Intifada and its transition from the stone-throwing revolution that began years earlier to a phase of armed action and martyrdom operations since 2000. The situation in the entire Arab region deteriorated as a result of this escalation, in addition to the increasing effects of the deadly and destructive American siege on Iraq since 1991, and its consequences. This was compounded by the ignition of security pursuit campaigns and the global war on terror led by America, in which all countries of the world, especially the governments of Arab and Islamic countries, participated.

Soon, the Arab gathering in Afghanistan, as well as its symbol Sheikh Osama bin Laden, became a constant star in Arab and international media, a source of

inspiration and mobilization for the Islamic Awakening, and a great horizontal extension for the Jihādī current and its supporters worldwide.

Arab Jihādī organizations, cells, and gatherings began to establish themselves in Afghanistan. By 2000, the number of Jihādī groups, camps, gatherings, or projects had reached fourteen, officially recognized by the Taliban, with programs of control, coordination, and cooperation linking them to the Ministries of Defense, Interior, and Intelligence, whether in coordinating their support and Jihād alongside the Taliban or in their own programs. This was aside from the Pakistani groups, which also had their own, numerous arrangements.

These gatherings, which were completely independent of each other, are:

Non-Arab Groups:

1. **Uzbek Mujāhidīn:** This was a large group relative to others. Their program aimed to transfer Jihād to Uzbekistan and overthrow the communist-American regime of Karimov, once the situation in Afghanistan had stabilized for the Taliban, and through complete programming with them. Their program at that time was recruitment, preparation, and training. It was a group linked to the Taliban. Their emir, Muhammad Tahir Jan, pledged allegiance (bayʿah) to Mullah Muhammad Omar as a general Imam, as did his deputy, the famous military commander Juma Bai—may Allāh have mercy on him. They had a very ambitious program for recruitment and propagation among Afghan Uzbeks, a community of over five million, many of whom were immigrants from Uzbekistan since the days of Tsarist occupation and the subsequent massacres by Stalin and Lenin. It was a well-organized group with high capabilities and financial resources, supported by Uzbek immigrant communities scattered in many countries.

2. **Mujāhidīn from East Turkestan (occupied by China):** This was a limited group, most of whom had secretly emigrated to escape Chinese rule. Their program was comprehensive and long-term educational, given the difficult conditions faced by Muslims in East Turkestan after successive Chinese governments implemented a policy of Chinese migration to their lands and succeeded in changing its demographic map, reducing the number of Turkestani Muslims from an overwhelming majority to about half the population, renaming it "Xinjiang" (New Territory). This was in addition to fierce measures since the communist rule of Mao Zedong. Part of this group's program was to send some of them into their homeland to bring out more emigrants and prepare them, in anticipation of military action they intended against China. Their emir, the martyred Sheikh Abū Muḥammad al-Turkistānī, was an exceptional and active man, one of the finest examples of mujāhidīn fleeing with their religion—and we do not praise him above Allāh. The Pakistani army killed him in Waziristan in November 2003—may Allāh fight them, and may He have vast mercy on him. The group also pledged general allegiance to Mullah Muhammad Omar. He asked them to halt their practical program against China and suffice with educating those who joined them, due to the Taliban's need for good relations with China to counterbalance American pressure, and they complied.
3. **Turkish Mujāhidīn:** This was a small group of Kurds and Turks. They operated very secretly, and their program was training. I do not know if they had a practical program in their homeland at that time.

Arab Groups:

1. **Al-Qāʿidah Organization:** Led by Sheikh Osama bin Laden—may Allāh Almighty protect him. Their program is well-known, and Sheikh Osama

pledged allegiance of imamate to the Commander of the Faithful, as we mentioned earlier.

2. **Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG):** Their emir was Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṣādiq—may Allāh release him. Their main program was preparation for Jihād against the Gaddafi regime in Libya, participation in supporting Jihādī causes in general, and contributing to supporting the Taliban. They made a good contribution in that regard.
3. **Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (GICM):** Their program was preparation and training of their elements, most of whom would arrive and then depart. Their goal was Jihād against the ruling regime in Morocco. Their emir was called Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Sharīf.
4. **Egyptian Jihād Group:** It had shrunk considerably. Their goal was to rebuild the group and gather its dispersed members. Their objective was well-known: Jihād against the ruling regime in Egypt. Their emir was Sheikh Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri—may Allāh Almighty protect him.
5. **Egyptian Islamic Group (al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah):** This was a very small group. Their presence was limited to emigration status, and they had no significant activity after adopting the initiative to stop Jihād against the Egyptian regime, known as the "Initiative to Halt Violence." Most of their important symbols resided in Iran, as is known, and some moved to Afghanistan in the last days of the Taliban.
6. **Gathering of Algerian Mujāhidīn:** Their goal was to gather whomever they could of their brothers to reorganize the Jihād in Algeria after the setbacks it had suffered.
7. **Gathering of Mujāhidīn from Tunisia:** Their goal was preparation, training, and gathering Tunisian youth for Jihād in Tunisia. Their camp made training contributions, and they included cadres who had previously fought in Bosnia.

8. **Gathering of Mujāhidīn from Jordan and Palestine:** Their program was preparation and training for Jihād in Jordan and Palestine. Their emir was brother Abū Muṣʿab al-Zarqāwī.
9. **Khalden Camp (General Training Camp):** This is one of the oldest Arab camps, its establishment dating back to the days of the Services Bureau and Sheikh Abdullah Azzam. Its emir was the well-known mujāhid Sheikh known as Ibn al-Shaykh (Ṣāliḥ al-Lībī)—may Allāh release him—assisted by brother Abū Zubaydah—may Allāh release him. The camp's objectives were purely training to support Jihād everywhere. It had a good output over the years; perhaps the number of those trained there since its establishment in 1989 exceeded twenty thousand.
10. **Sheikh Abū Khabbāb al-Miṣrī Camp (General Training Camp):** This was a specialized training camp for instruction in the manufacture and use of explosives and chemicals.
11. **Al-Ghurabā' Camp Group (our group):** It was linked to the Taliban and also had a general training camp, a studies and research center, and lectures. I founded it in 2000 to establish a training school based on comprehensive intellectual, methodological, Sharīʿah-political, and military-educational preparation, which I saw the Arab Afghan arena had lacked in both its rounds. The other goal of its establishment was to launch the call for Global Islamic Resistance (which I detailed in this book), in addition to organic linkage with the Islamic Emirate, contributing to its construction and defense, and working in Afghanistan through direct arrangement with the Commander of the Faithful. I briefly explained the group's objectives to Mullah Muhammad Omar and pledged allegiance to him on Muharram 15, 2001. Our group was linked from then on to the Commander of the Faithful and operated through the Ministry of Defense of the Islamic Emirate.

Then, the American and Western war, with the participation of Islamic countries, escalated against the Taliban and Afghanistan, especially against Sheikh Osama and Al-Qāʿidah, who carried out two attacks on the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, followed by another martyrdom attack on the American destroyer USS Cole in the port of Aden, Yemen, during this period (1997-2000). This was in addition to the media escalation launched by Sheikh Osama from Afghanistan since his arrival there, through a series of press and television interviews in which he incited Muslims to war against America and Jihād.

American and global pressure, serious threats, and the economic and media siege on Afghanistan intensified. America began to warn of war against the terrorists there, especially its stubborn adversary, Sheikh Osama. Then, the decisive event occurred on September 11, 2001.

A group of Al-Qāʿidah members carried out the famous historic martyrdom attack on the New York towers and the Pentagon on the morning of September 11, 2001.

Although Al-Qāʿidah did not claim responsibility for the operations, the fingers of accusation and the evidence held by the Americans were clear.

America decided to invade Afghanistan, overthrow the Taliban, install a client government there, and eliminate as many Taliban and Arab Jihādī gatherings present under the cloak of the Commander of the Faithful as it could.

I am not here to delve into the history of extremely important events that I witnessed myself, indeed, was part of in Afghanistan. As I mentioned, I intend to do so, if Allāh wills and assists. But I will limit myself here to what relates to this chapter, which is the impact of that event on the trajectory of the Jihādī current.

That impact, according to my belief, led to a tragic end for the Jihādī current and terminated its phase that extended from the early sixties of the last century until

September 2001. The Jihādī current entered the ordeal of the contemporary "trench" (ukhdūd) that swallowed most of its cadres during the following three years (2001-2004).

Thereafter, and after the occupation of Iraq which occurred two years later, a new historical phase began in the history of the Jihādī current, indeed, of the Islamic Awakening, the Arab and Islamic world, and even the entire world.

Some Repercussions and Consequences of the Event:

The enemy's losses in the September attacks were enormous by any measure. I hope they have marked the beginning of the true downfall, if Allāh wills, of this barbaric, savage state called the United States of America, which embodied the peak brutality of contemporary Western civilization, initiated by European colonial powers and contributed to by Russia, with America then inheriting all its satanic attributes and establishing upon them the contemporary Judeo-Crusader system of arrogance.

Al-Qāʿidah was a major part of the bloc of Arab Afghan mujāhidīn in Afghanistan, who in turn were an important part of the general Jihādī current. This current consists of the sum of organizations, groups, and gatherings spread across most Muslim countries and even in many diaspora countries. It also includes many Jihādī individuals and cadres—scholars, thinkers, preachers, and writers—who all carried the Jihādī ideology that adopts a specific methodology and armed action as an indispensable means to establish Allāh's Sharīʿah and repel injustice from Islām and Muslims, as the only solution to the accumulated problems of this Ummah.

The American machine merged this entire current, its components, and even its supporters—indeed, everyone it wished to eliminate from the entire spectrum of the Islamic Awakening across its different schools—under the label of "Al-Qāʿidah," making them all a target for its war under the banner of combating terrorism. This is a topic worthy of research but not for this book, because America achieved

extremely malicious and dangerous objectives through this unrealistic generalization.

The collapse of the towers in New York and the crumbling of the Pentagon wall on the heads of America's generals were followed by many collapses in the Islamic ranks. Many parties suffered heavy losses. Among those who suffered greatly were all parties and schools of the Islamic Awakening, with the Jihādī current, its various organizations, and entities being the most affected at the level of individuals, leaders, and groups everywhere. Indeed, the repercussions and reactions from the enemy affected every Muslim everywhere. This was a reason why many circles within the Islamic Awakening, and even some Jihādī ones, did not view this glorious act with satisfaction.

Many sincere Muslims criticized it, convinced that:

- It had brought calamity upon Muslims and placed them in an unequal battle where they would be the certain losers.
- It justified the American onslaught and gave it pretext to reoccupy the Islamic world and inflict the heaviest losses on Muslims.
- It practically nullified most of the specific programs of many regional and national Jihād projects, making them automatically subservient.
- Indeed, it caused the removal of the nascent Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan, eliminating the sole base to which most Jihād projects, groups, and leaders had sought refuge, and so on.

Many of these criticisms are supported by what we observe and experience. From this perspective, these viewpoints perhaps have their justifications.

However, on the other hand, and to grasp the full picture, anyone following American policies concerning the Islamic world, indeed, the entire Third World, especially the Middle East—through their practices and the declared writings of

their senior thinkers, theorists, and political strategists in published books, reports, and studies prepared by major think tanks and reviewed by leading thinkers like Kissinger, Nixon, and Huntington—finds that they have expressed and declared American policy objectives for the twenty-first century and the unbridled desire for sole global dominance. This was a program set for implementation regardless of whether the September events occurred or not.

Nixon, in his book *Victory Without War*, stated that America must work to make the 21st century an American century and must work to dismantle the Soviet Union, prevent China's rise and fragment it into warring nationalities, obstruct European unity, curb the industrial progress of Southeast Asia and control it, and plan to control the "Muslim giant" stirring to rise, as he put it. America also formed Rapid Deployment Forces (Marines) to occupy oil sources since Carter's days in the early seventies. This is in addition to the policy based on the beliefs of extremist Crusaders who built their evangelical-biblical perceptions according to Zionist interpretations as a basis for the doctrine of fanatical American Christianity, which relies on the idea of supporting Israel and the Jews in anticipation of the devastating battle of Armageddon in northern Palestine as a prelude to the descent of Christ to save the Christians. This is in addition to evil philosophies they developed based on theories of the clash of civilizations and white racial supremacy. This information has become openly discussed in international media, concerning the phenomenon of the "neoconservatives," the Christian-Zionist faction to which Bush and his aides belong.

There is abundant evidence that America has been moving against us since the collapse of the Soviet Union, inaugurating this with the Gulf War, then with a series of security conferences against what they termed Islamic fundamentalism. This followed the important meeting that brought together Reagan, Thatcher, and Gorbachev, in which they openly declared Islām a civilizational adversary to

Western civilization after the end of the Cold War and decided to incorporate Warsaw Pact components into NATO, which would lead the Crusader war against Muslims.

Many documents prove this, which we do not cite here for fear of length. This information is well-known among Arab and Muslim intellectuals and in the media.

All of this indicates that America, Israel, and Western Europe were heading towards us before what happened in September, and that America was not incapable of finding any pretext had Al-Qāʿidah not existed and the September 11 attacks not occurred, just as it used Iraq as a pretext to occupy the Gulf in the Kuwait War, and as they use pretexts today to occupy Iraq and expand towards the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, all evidence from logic and reality proves that the September events are not the cause of this onslaught, although they may have hastened an inevitable confrontation and made it more dramatic.

Even America's attack on Afghanistan is acknowledged in all global media and by many politicians as an attack motivated by American interests in Central Asian oil and its need for a regime that secures its transport to the Gulf from Afghanistan, completes the American encirclement of China, besieges Iran from the east, and eliminates any possibility of Muslims ruling by Sharīʿah in Afghanistan so that it does not become a precedent to be emulated. Neither Sheikh Osama, nor the Arab Afghans, nor the Central Asian mujāhidīn residing under Taliban protection were the reason for the attack on Afghanistan. Rather, the reason was the Taliban's implementation of Sharīʿah and their regime's rebellion against America's law in international politics, in addition to America's imperial ambitions in the region. And Allāh Almighty knows best.

Regardless of differing viewpoints on the event and its repercussions, it imposed a reality that Muslims, leaders of the Islamic Awakening, and Jihādī leaderships must

now confront. They must know that America had decided upon and imposed its aggression on Muslims with this momentum, arranging it with the Jews, its European allies, and Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the removal of the Berlin Wall between the Warsaw Pact and NATO. Roles were distributed, a large part of which was assigned and entrusted to apostate governments in the Arab and Islamic world. This ongoing war was imposed by the enemy and implemented by them before September 2001; its events did not create it. It is a war imposed by economic interests and geopolitical considerations, a result of historical roots and the religious perceptions of Jews and Americans regarding the conflict with Muslims.

The details of the September events are well-known, too famous to repeat here where there is no room for elaboration. Therefore, I will skip over their details to the repercussions of the event on the Jihādī current in Afghanistan, where its elite—in terms of leaders, symbols, cadres, and the leaderships of major Jihādī organizations, groups, and blocs from the Arab world, Central Asia, and Pakistan—were present at that time.

Repercussions of the September 2001 Events on the Jihādī Current in Afghanistan:

The Americans began the war with waves of concentrated aerial bombardment from early October to mid-November. Vanguards of the Northern Alliance advanced to conduct the ground war on behalf of the Americans from three axes: from the north towards Kabul, from the Pakistani border in the southeast towards Kandahar, and from the northeast towards Jalalabad. Mazar-i-Sharif fell, then Kabul, into the hands of the Northern Alliance in December 2001.

Marauders, highway robbers, thieves, and tribes that worked in the American program seized cities one after another. Taliban resistance crumbled, and their garrisons and leaderships surrendered in a manner surprising to everyone.

Within less than a week after the fall of Kabul, the fall of the Taliban was announced, and Karzai was handed the reins of power. Then, America's agents on the ground continued to carry out their tasks, in which millions of dollars played an important role in their performance with utmost filthiness and ugliness.

Then America, under the leadership of Bush, launched what it called the "Global War on Terrorism," in which Pakistan played the main role. Pakistan undertook the liquidation and arrest of those who headed towards the only haven on its territory. Various Arab and Islamic countries then followed suit by participating, in addition to what America's major allies did, which led to the extensive destruction of what remained of the Jihādī current.

As for what concerns us regarding the Arab contingent of Jihādīs and emigrants in Afghanistan, the summary of what happened was a historical massacre of the Jihādī current, the worst in its entire history. And Allāh's command was a decreed destiny. The following is a summary, without delving into specifics, of the losses and calamities from the onset of the catastrophic events until September 2004, the time of writing these lines—a period of three harsh years:

- The martyrdom of approximately 400 Arab mujāhidīn during the battles to defend Afghanistan. They fought valiantly defending various front lines or fell due to intense bombing during the withdrawal of vehicle convoys from major cities towards the Pakistani border.
- Due to the treachery of some Pakistani border tribesmen, Pakistan captured approximately 150 mujāhidīn who had emerged from the battles of Tora Bora immediately after the war, during the first month of 2002. They were handed

over to the Americans, who transferred them to the notorious Guantanamo Bay detention camp in Cuba.

- Approximately 100 mujāhidīn were martyred in sporadic clashes with the Pakistani army in the border regions, on travel routes, or inside some Pakistani cities during the following two years, from early 2002 until September 2004.
- During that period, Pakistani forces captured over 600 Arab mujāhidīn who were fleeing with their families and hiding on its territory. They handed them over directly to America to be incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay or its brutal detention centers in Afghanistan.
- Iran detained more than 400 Arab mujāhidīn on its territory. It handed most of them over to their home countries, as its government officially admitted. Nearly one hundred of them remain prisoners in Iran, subject, according to Iranian government sources, to imprisonment and political bargaining with America.

If we consider that the total number of Arab mujāhidīn present in Afghanistan at the time of this event was approximately 1,900, including heads of families among residents and emigrants, the losses in terms of martyrs and captives exceeded 1,600 out of 1,900. This accounts for about 75% of the human resource base of the Arab Afghans present in Afghanistan during that period. Furthermore, the campaigns of pursuit and arrest launched by America and its collaborating security agencies in Europe, the Arab and Islāmic world, and indeed globally, led to the arrest and capture of hundreds of Jihādīs—members of groups, sympathizers with the Jihādī current, or even wronged individuals close to them who were captured without any involvement whatsoever in this conflict.

This is in addition to the heavy losses among Jihādīs from Central Asia, especially Uzbek mujāhidīn and their associates from Central Asian countries, most of whose

military cadres were martyred. This figure perhaps exceeded 500 martyrs, not counting prisoners. Most were martyred in Afghanistan, and some in battles with the Pakistani army, supported by American forces, in the Waziristan region.

Similarly, heavy losses were inflicted upon the mujāhidīn from East Turkestan. The latest of these losses was the martyrdom of their emir, Hassan Abu Muhammad al-Turkistani, along with some of his brethren, may Allāh Almighty have mercy upon them and grant them noble hospitality among the emigrant strangers fleeing for their faith. The Pakistani army—may Allāh destroy them—killed him in November 2003 during pursuit operations in the سرحد (Sarhad) province.

By mid-2003, US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld declared that their security and military campaign against terrorism had enabled them to kill or capture over 3,000 "terrorists," in his terms. I believe this figure is close to reality. Losses in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran accounted for more than half of this number, while the number of Jihādīs and their sympathizers imprisoned in Britain alone reached about 300, as official statistics indicated, not to mention the dozens announced as arrested in other European countries. In Arab countries, Yemen launched a campaign against Jihādīs, returnees from Afghanistan, and their sympathizers, in which dozens were killed and hundreds captured. Saudi Arabia announced the arrest of more than 220 individuals officially accused of affiliation with al-Qaeda. The number of those arrested, detained, and interrogated in Saudi Arabia is in the thousands; hundreds were imprisoned without charge or trial. This is because Saudi Arabia and Yemen were among the countries from which the largest percentage of Arab youth came to Afghanistan and were also among the countries most intensely pursuing them. These campaigns also affected hundreds here and there, everywhere, culminating in the events in Morocco since November 2003, where hundreds were also arrested. Dozens of death sentences, life imprisonments, and long-term sentences were issued against them. The affliction extended to hundreds

of innocents who held Jihādī thought or sympathized with it but had no connection to any actions. The circles of accusation and tribulation expanded to include most Jihādīs and their sympathizers worldwide, from the Horn of Africa to the Philippines, Indonesia, Southeast Asia, Turkey, and every corner of the globe.

The calamity was catastrophic and immense, in every sense of the word, for three reasons:

1. The figure, ranging between 3,000 and 4,000 Jihādī elements, their supporters, and sympathizers, according to what was announced—though the reality is far greater—actually represents most of the active segment of Jihādīs in this era. It even includes many from the core circle of their sympathizers in the Arab and Islāmic world and in Muslim communities in the West. This epic represented an eradication of the fundamental human base of the Jihādī current in this age.
2. The devastating blow that befell the Arab and Central Asian mujāhidīn in Afghanistan and Pakistan decimated the core elite of cadres and veterans of the Jihādī current. It struck the cream of their leadership and symbols who remained active from the first generation of Arab Afghans—approximately 150 mujāhid cadres, the very essence of the remaining symbols and operatives in the Jihādī current over the last quarter of the twentieth century. Killing and capture crushed most of this prime group. I may not be exaggerating if I state for the historical record a piece of information known to the enemy, which no one has yet had the respite from the shock to enumerate: perhaps only a very, very small number of these individuals remain alive and uncaptured. I ask Allāh to protect them and aid them in rebuilding.
3. The catastrophe extended further, with the great chasm devouring even some of those nurtured by these individuals from the vanguard cadres of the third

> Jihādī generation—the youth who came to the new Jihād arena in Afghanistan during the second wave of Arab Afghans (1996–2001). Praise be to Allāh, a considerable number of these individuals survived and dispersed throughout the earth, praise be to Allāh.

Returning to the focus of this section of the chapter after this tragic digression, I say: The Jihādī current, which began its course in the early sixties, flourished in the late seventies and early eighties, and whose hopes soared in Afghanistan with the establishment of the Islāmic Emirate, witnessed a great chasm that marked the end of its previous era after the events of September 2001.
This was to begin a new phase in the path of the Jihādī current in confronting the contemporary Crusader-Jewish campaigns, by Allāh's permission.

It is for the sake of contributing to the launch of these hopes that I write this book. This period begins with confronting the American-led "global war on terror" and its direct military invasions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Middle East. New arenas of conflict and new realities are appearing on the horizon, leaving their mark on the triumphant path of Jihād, by Allāh's permission—a path whose continuation and survival were heralded by the noblest of creation, Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Seventh: The Most Significant Armed Jihādī Experiences in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century

Unfortunately, the fundamental problem within the sphere of Islāmic work in general, and Jihādī work in particular, is the scarcity of those active in writing and the scarcity of writers among those active in the field.
Therefore, most of the important Jihādī experiences of the Jihādī current, and indeed most experiences of the Jihādī phenomenon, have vanished without their participants writing about them. I mean those who carried them out, witnessed

them firsthand, or had genuine, organic contact with them. To the best of my knowledge, out of dozens of long-term or limited experiences, none of the participants have written anything significant, or at least nothing that has achieved widespread dissemination. Consequently, the Ummah and its future generations have missed out on extremely important lessons, and stories and details of events of profound magnificence and significance from those epics undertaken by the first and second generations of this Jihādī current, from its inception until the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first.
Meanwhile, some adversaries, some journalist-merchants, or some sedentary Don Quixotes of the Islāmic Awakening—owners of paunches grown soft under the coolness of air conditioners—have intruded upon writing on behalf of those who had the actual experiences.

I have tried to break this rule, being one of the few field operatives who worked within this current through some of its experiences and interacted with many figures from other experiences. I will provide a summary of this, Allāh Almighty willing, in this chapter.

- I wrote the book *The Jihādī Islāmic Revolution in Syria: Pains and Hopes*, which included a summary of the history of that Jihād, many of its documents, and its lessons. The book is about 900 pages and was published in 1990.
- I also wrote the book *My Testimony on the Jihād in Algeria (1989–1996)*. Its final drafts, around 200 pages, were lost along with my belongings left in Kabul during its fall in December 2001. I rewrote it during our ordeal here in Pakistan and will publish it with this book, Allāh willing.
- I also wrote a documented book about the ordeal of the Arab Afghan mujāhidīn and Islamists in general in Pakistan during these three years after September 2001, and I will also publish it soon, Allāh willing.

- I have now prepared outlines and some drafts for a very important book to cover the history and lessons of what I believe to be the most significant experiences of the last century: *The Experience of the Jihādī Current under the Taliban from the Establishment of the Emirate in 1996 until its Fall after the September 2001 Events, and its Repercussions*. I ask Allāh to help me complete it after finishing this important book, to enable me to bear a testimony that pleases Him, to aid me with its consequences, and to reward me for it.

Therefore, to maximize the benefit of this chapter, I will provide here a summary of the most important Jihādī experiences that occurred during the second half of the last century, based on what I heard directly from their participants through my involvement with the Jihādī current. Perhaps this will motivate the living participants of those experiences to write about them.
I will list them in historical chronological order of their inception, Allāh willing. The most important of these experiences are:

1. The Moroccan Youth Movement Experience (1963)

This movement was founded by Sheikh Abd al-Karim Mutiʿ, may Allāh protect him. He sought to establish an armed Jihādī organization to revolt against the regime of King Hassan II in Morocco. The organization's cells were arrested, and many of its members were imprisoned. Those who survived, including Sheikh Abd al-Karim, emigrated from Morocco, and the movement's activity ceased.
I found writings by Sheikh Abd al-Karim Mutiʿ that generally contained mature and distinguished Jihādī thought. I also found a book chronicling that attempt, which I later lost with my library in London after my hasty departure in 1997. That book did not contain significant historical or methodological material. I also met an old member of that organization during my stay in London (1994–1997), and he told me about important historical episodes in their experience, but I do not recall them now.

2. The Egyptian Jihād Organization Experience (1965–2000)

The martyr Sayyid Qutb, may Allāh have mercy on him, attempted to put his call and ideas into practice. An organization was founded upon a group of elite Jihādī youth in Egypt who were his contemporaries, most of whom were cadres of the Muslim Brotherhood at the time. A historical document titled "Why They Executed Me" was published, attributed to the late martyr Sayyid Qutb; its context and the testimony of some of its members indicate its authenticity. According to that document, Sayyid Qutb, may Allāh have mercy on him, mentioned that an elite group of Jihādī youth had formed some secret cells to confront Gamal Abdel Nasser's regime following the brutal attack by Egyptian security and judicial apparatuses under the deceased Abdel Nasser on the Muslim Brotherhood in 1965, and before that in 1954, when some of their cadres were executed and tens of thousands imprisoned in horrific historical prisons. He mentioned in that document that those youths had approached him to be the emir of that organization, and he had accepted to be their guide and spiritual father, and that he had developed some military plans with them. He stated that he was arrested with those youths following that attempt.
Sayyid Qutb, may Allāh have mercy on him, was sentenced to death and killed along with a number of those young men, and that attempt was nipped in the bud.

I heard from Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri in some of his recordings, and perhaps also in some direct sessions, that some of Sayyid's students and contemporary youth who were influenced by his thought continued clandestine activity and propagated his ideas. These activities later transformed into the initial cells of the Egyptian Jihād Organization, some of whose cadres and leaders were arrested following the assassination of Anwar Sadat (1981) and remain imprisoned to this day.
It appears that several Jihādī attempts occurred in Egypt thereafter, one of the most prominent being the attempt known as the "Military Technical College" incident—a limited and failed coup attempt led by the martyr Salih Sirriyyah, may Allāh have

mercy on him, in which a number of Jihādī cadres were tried and executed. However, the Jihād Organization resumed its activity and crystallized well during the era of openness under Sadat in the second half of the seventies. This was followed by the departure of a number of its leaders and cadres, headed by Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, to Afghanistan in 1986. I experienced this period up close through my strong relationship with its key figures during both phases of the Arab Afghan experience in Afghanistan. Although I believe that the Jihādī experiences in Egypt are among the most mature Jihādī experiences in the Arab and Islāmic world in terms of intellectual and methodological aspects, and the most productive and firmly rooted, as well as being among the most important organizationally and operationally, I learned from Dr. Ayman that no one had dedicated themselves to writing its history, the documents of which lie in the torture chambers and investigation files of the Egyptian government's investigative and security services. I reviewed drafts of a book on this subject that Dr. Ayman sent me for review in early 2001 in Kabul, which was good but very limited considering the length and scale of those experiences. I discussed this with Dr. Ayman and urged him to expand on it, as he is the best living, informed, and field-experienced witness, whose duty it is to write that history. However, he apologized, as operational concerns kept him busy day and night in Afghanistan in those days. I ask Allāh to prolong his life and the lives of our remaining brothers from that generation so that these experiences may be written.

Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri and a number of Jihād Organization cadres, after arriving in Afghanistan, endeavored to establish a significant Jihādī experience within the contemporary Jihādī current. This was through the two phases of the Arab Afghan experience (1986–1991) and (1996–2001). I will summarize the most prominent aspects of that experience that I recall from close association with its pioneers and its inception in the following points:

- Dr. Ayman, along with a group of Jihād Organization cadres from Egypt, arrived in Peshawar in 1986 and subsequent years, after having been imprisoned for three years in connection with the Jihād Organization case and its role in Sadat's assassination. They had a prominent presence and activity among the Arab Afghans during the 1986–1991 phase.
- Cooperation occurred on multiple levels between them and Sheikh Usama bin Laden, who was then intending to establish his own organization, known at that time as Al-Qaeda, formally founded in early 1988. It was built on the efforts of a number of cadres and trainers, among whom Jihād Organization cadres were prominent. Notable among them were the martyr Abu Ubaydah al-Banshiri, may Allāh have mercy on him, who died in a ferry accident on Lake Victoria while managing Al-Qaeda's operations in Kenya during its stay in Sudan (1992–1996), and the martyr Abu Hafs al-Masri (Muhammad Atef), who was martyred in the battles during the fall of the Emirate in November 2001 in an American bombing of his headquarters in Kandahar, where he was Al-Qaeda's military commander. The Jihād Organization benefited from this cooperation, which provided it with significant material support, enabling it to establish its independent camps in Afghanistan, manage the movement, and continue its activities in Egypt.
- The core strategic program of the Egyptian Jihād Organization was to rely on instigating a military coup carried out by officers who were members of the organization, whom it had planted in the Egyptian army since Anwar Sadat's days. Its cells continued until they were eliminated during the intensive arrest campaigns the organization later faced. Their general idea, as I understood it directly from Dr. Ayman in several private sessions, was to carry out a coup supported by guerilla cells that were being prepared during that period.

- After Sadat's assassination, and due to the intertwined relationships between members of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah who carried out the operation and members of the Jihād Organization who participated in it, a number of the Jihād Organization's military cadres were arrested, most notably the martyr Major Essam al-Qamari, may Allāh have mercy on him. However, this security blow did not affect the progress of their clandestine work, neither in the army cells nor in the civilian secret cells.
- Following the policy of liquidation pursued by the Egyptian Ministry of Interior, especially during the tenure of its criminal minister Zaki Badr, against the semi-overt Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah, which had adopted a strategy of open daʿwah and popular revolution influenced by the Iranian revolution model, Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah decided to respond to state provocations and the policy of "striking at the core," as Zaki Badr termed it. This response took the form of assassinating regime figures in retaliation for the state's assassination of the group's figures. The Jihād Organization, whose leadership, along with that of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah, was present in Peshawar (Pakistan) and the border provinces of Afghanistan during that period of Afghan Jihād, decided to contribute to the confrontation in support of them, thereby deviating from its secret program of preparing and planning for a military coup. They believed it was possible for this tactical program to run parallel to that strategic program.
- The arrest of a civilian member of the clandestine Jihād Organization led to the arrest of an officer from the military wing of the organization. This arrest gradually led to most of the organization's military cadres. The collapse of the internal organization (in Egypt) began, as I recall, in late 1989 or early 1990.
- The disaster continued, and the organization suffered two subsequent security blows, one of which resulted in about 900 detainees from the civilian clandestine organization, and the next in about 600 detainees. These

individuals constituted most of the organization's youth base inside Egypt, which had been prepared at the highest levels during the Afghan Jihād phase.

- The leadership of the Jihād Organization departed for Sudan, accompanying Sheikh Usama bin Laden and his elite leadership and cadres. This followed the success of the Islamists in the coup that brought Al-Turabi and Al-Bashir to power. The Jihād Organization began to operate anew in very favorable conditions due to their presence on Egypt's long southern border with Sudan. This was with the support and arrangement of the new government in Sudan and its intelligence agencies. Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah did likewise. The organization opened a camp and a number of bases for itself in Khartoum and began reorganizing, with support and funding from Sheikh Usama, as became known and famous later. The goal was to overthrow Hosni Mubarak's regime and establish an Islāmic government in Egypt—a government that would alter the strategic balance with all types of enemies in the Middle East region.
- Political storms buffeted this program. The Sudanese leadership turned its back on the Jihādīs there, starting with the Libyan brothers, then the Egyptians, then the rest, including Sheikh Usama, who had stood with them heroically and boldly from their inception, helping them rearm the army and build the economy. But they betrayed their loyalty and broke their covenants.
- This blow destroyed what had been newly built of their program in Egypt. The Sudanese government forced Sheikh Usama to stop funding the work program in Egypt, then pressured everyone, eventually expelling them.
- Dr. Ayman and his remaining cadres joined Sheikh Usama in Afghanistan under the Taliban after several journeys of displacement in a number of countries during 1996–1998. Another number of the remaining cadres and cells chose to wait in various diaspora countries.
- The Jihād Organization and Al-Qaeda resumed their experiment of cooperation and building in the fields of funding and training. However,

Sheikh Usama had reached a firm conviction to unify the direction towards confronting America, while the Jihād Organization, like other organizations, maintained its "national aspirations, clandestine methods, and Jihādī intellectual methodology."

- Dr. Ayman signed Sheikh Usama's declaration of the "World Islamic Front for Jihād Against Jews and Crusaders" in late 1997, while Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah distanced itself from it. Soon, the Jihād Organization began to pay the price for that signature in confrontations with American global security campaigns against terrorism. Its scattered cadres and elements in various countries began to fall. Many were abducted from different countries and handed over to Egypt—from Thailand, Albania, Azerbaijan, the United Arab Emirates, and others. Meanwhile, some of their members were arrested in other countries that did not extradite them and were imprisoned there, as in Britain.
- Dr. Ayman, with his unique determination and relentless patience, continued the attempt with the remaining cadres, not surrendering to the reality imposed by the new world order, which had practically rendered hierarchical, clandestine, national Jihādī attempts obsolete.
- The organization opened its own special camp, attracted its remaining cadres, and tried to resume. However, the general circumstances and realities, especially security-related ones—as arrests swept through the organization abroad—convinced Sheikh Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri of the available path for Jihād and work in Afghanistan with Sheikh Usama bin Laden in his war against America, for realistic reasons stemming from political and field convictions that began to form in his mind. I personally followed this transformation with him and spoke with him at length about its circumstances shortly before the September events. Perhaps I will present some details of this in the book I will dedicate to the history of the Arab

Afghans in the Taliban era, Allāh willing, as this is not the place for these details.

- Dr. Ayman officially announced his pledge of allegiance to Sheikh Usama bin Laden and the merging of the Jihād Organization with Al-Qaeda in mid-2001. This led to a split among the handful of men who remained with him from the cadres in Afghanistan into two factions: one group agreed with this direction, and another insisted on continuing efforts in programs to establish an Islāmic government in Egypt on the ruins of Hosni Mubarak's government through Jihād in the old style. They considered his dissolution of the organization illegitimate, arguing that the emir's task is to manage the organization, not dissolve it and merge it with another. This faction was led by Brother Abu al-Samh (Tharwat Salah Shihata), a lawyer and one of the organization's veteran cadres, also an old Arab Afghan.
- The September events did not give either wing much time to proceed far with their programs and ambitions. Soon, all remaining Arab Afghans gathered in the battle of destiny, defending themselves and the Emirate whose fall fate had decreed. Most of the remaining cadres were martyred in those battles. Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri moved on after exerting his utmost effort; his wife, his only son Muhammad, and his infant daughter were martyred, may Allāh have mercy on them, during the brutal bombing raids by American aircraft. He settled with Sheikh Usama in their mobile hideout—may Allāh protect them—to continue the path of Jihād and incitement, as is well-known. Another group went with Professor Tharwat Shihata on the paths of migration and displacement once again, eventually settling in Iranian prisons, as media outlets announced.
- This was the summary of the operational path of the Jihād Organization that Dr. Ayman pursued outside Egypt. I do not know if there are any new shoots

for it that Allāh may decree to grow and resume the path and extend it in Egypt with those who are marching on.

- As for the intellectual identity of the Egyptian Jihād Organization, based on the preceding presentation, it can perhaps be said that the organization has operationally ended. It was born in the mid-sixties and ended in the chasm of September 2001.

  However, it is crucial to mention that the intellectual school of the Jihād Organization remains the most prominent, important, and deeply rooted in this last century. It began with the library of Sayyid Qutb, may Allāh have mercy on him, which contains the fundamentals of contemporary Jihādī thought. Then, during the Afghan Jihād phase, while active in Peshawar, the Jihād Organization produced a rich and important literary output. Among the most important were the book *Al-ʿUmdah fi Iʿdād al-ʿUddah* (The Mainstay in Preparing Equipment) by Sheikh Abd al-Qadir ibn Abd al-Aziz, and his other valuable book *Al-Jāmiʿ fi Talab al-ʿIlm al-Sharīf* (The Compendium in Seeking Noble Knowledge), of which the organization released a revised version titled *Al-Hādi ila Sabīl al-Rashād* (The Guide to the Path of Righteousness), as well as a series of important newsletters it published successively in Peshawar during the period 1988–1992. This was in addition to a number of audio and video recordings by Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, may Allāh protect him. The importance of the intellectual and methodological role of the Egyptian Jihād Organization stems not only from the significance of its library but also from the fact that it became an intellectual and methodological foundation for the majority of organizations, gatherings, and most individuals in the Jihādī current from the early nineties to the present day. All subsequent intellectual and media productions by various segments of the Jihādī current and the Arab Afghans have revolved around it, as has what became known as Jihādī Salafism or other Jihādī schools in the modern era. So, may Allāh reward them

> with all good and accept from them by His grace and generosity. Similarly, the early military cadres of the Egyptian Jihād Organization in the Afghan Jihād arena and the group of outstanding military cadres and trainers who worked in the Arab Jihād arena in Afghanistan in its first phase (1986–1992) and second phase (1996–2001) played a role that left its important marks within the sum of military and field efforts of Arab Jihād cadres in Afghanistan, whether through the written heritage they left in military and operational training manuals, or through practical efforts in training Jihādīs of other nationalities and the many cadres who graduated at their hands and the hands of their peers, and then continued to contribute after them. So, may Allāh reward them on behalf of Islām and the Muslims with the best reward, and accept from them the best of their deeds. He is All-Hearing, All-Responsive.

On a personal level, I knew the experience of the Jihād group closely, and I was bound by ties of brotherhood and intimate friendship with most of its leaders who were present in Afghanistan, in addition to working relationships and cooperation in many fields, starting with Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri and extending to most of them. I saw in them outstanding examples of ideological, patient mujāhidīn, fleeing for their faith. May Allāh have mercy on them and grant them abundant reward. On the intellectual level, I am very grateful for the great benefit I gained intellectually from my interaction and acquaintance with them. I must not forget to record my thanks and greetings to Sheikh Dr. Abd al-Qadir ibn Abd al-Aziz (Sayyid Imam al-Sharif), the mufti, scholar, and emir of the Jihād group during the Afghanistan phase. His books, knowledge, and my discussions with him left a profound impact on my soul and thought; may Allāh grant him relief. Likewise, the mujāhid and outstanding model, Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, may Allāh protect him; he influenced me as a thinker, writer, and a wonderful role model, may Allāh protect him, and many others. Most

of them have met their fate; we ask Allāh to gather me with them in the highest companionship.

3. The Jihādī Experience in Syria (1965–1983)

The Jihādī experience in Syria dates back to Sheikh Marwan Hadid, may Allāh have mercy on him, who was raised in the Muslim Brotherhood. During his agricultural engineering studies in Egypt, he was influenced by the ideas of Sayyid Qutb, may Allāh have mercy on him. He returned to Syria full of enthusiasm at a time when the secular, nationalist, socialist Baʿth party had seized power. He became active in the mosques of Hama, delivering sermons, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and calling for the implementation of Sharīʿah. He was arrested multiple times. In 1965, government forces raided a mosque where he and a number of his students were, leading to an armed clash with the authorities. Several of them were martyred, and the Sheikh and others were arrested and sentenced to death. The head of state at the time, President Amin al-Hafiz, was then forced to release them under pressure from scholars in Syria, led by Sheikh Muhammad al-Hamid, may Allāh have mercy on him.

Sheikh Marwan had realized that a major confrontation with the Baʿthist regime was inevitable and warned early of an upcoming sectarian Nusayri project. When he could not convince the Muslim Brotherhood to prepare for confrontation, he and his students took it upon themselves to prepare through armed action with the Palestine Liberation Organization, via its Islāmic faction. He managed to prepare the first Jihādī elite for his Jihādī organization.

In 1970, Hafez al-Assad and the Nusayri Alawite group within the army and Baʿth party staged a "white coup" called the "Corrective Movement." Thus, the Nusayri sect, extremists among the esoteric Shia, jumped to the forefront to openly assume power and rule over Muslims in Syria, exactly as Sheikh Marwan, may Allāh have mercy on him, had warned.

Sheikh Marwan Hadid, may Allāh have mercy on him, returned to mobilize for confrontation anew. He sought to unite the two factions of the Muslim Brotherhood organization in Syria, which had split during that period, on a project to confront the regime. However, both wings—the one affiliated with the international organization headed by Sheikh Abd al-Fattah Abu Ghuddah, may Allāh have mercy on him, and his deputy Adnan Saʿid al-Din, as well as the other wing led by Issam al-Attar—agreed, despite their significant differences, to reject the project of preparing for confrontation and preferred to continue their peaceful daʿwah approach.

When Sheikh Marwan Hadid, may Allāh have mercy on him, became convinced that it was impossible to persuade the Muslim Brotherhood to confront the regime, he formed his own organization, which he named "The Fighting Vanguard of Hizb Allāh." He established three main cells for it in his hometown of Hama, his main field of activity, in Aleppo, Syria's second most important city, and in the capital, Damascus, where he moved in hiding to prepare for the confrontation with the Nusayris.

The Muslim Brotherhood expelled Marwan from their organization along with a group of those influenced by his revolutionary Jihādī ideas and tried to restrain him. But he continued to recruit supporters, most of whom were young Muslim Brotherhood members, and uttered his famous saying: "If the Brotherhood expels me through the door, I will enter upon them through the window, and I will drag them to Jihād." And this is indeed what happened.

Sheikh Marwan Hadid was arrested in 1970 after an armed clash with intelligence services at his hideout in Damascus. He remained in prison until 1975, during which he lost half his weight under torture. He was then executed by a lethal injection in prison, as was rumored at the time. He was buried, may Allāh have mercy on him, his grave concealed, and his family was not allowed to announce a funeral for him.

The leadership of the Fighting Vanguard organization passed to his students. The emirate was taken over after him by the martyr Abd al-Sattar al-Zaʿim, may Allāh have mercy on him. The Vanguard adopted a secret plan for confrontation through targeted assassinations of senior Nusayri state officials. They carried this out during the years 1975–1979, and the state was unable to identify them until the end of that period, with the cooperation of Jordanian intelligence.

The Vanguard declared Jihād against the regime in Syria in the summer of 1979, in the month of Shaʿban 1399 AH, and announced itself under its new name, "The Fighting Vanguard of the Muslim Brotherhood." Urban guerrilla warfare began throughout Syria.

The Muslim Brotherhood (the main wing linked to the international organization) initially declared its dissociation from that confrontation and demanded investigation committees to prove their non-involvement in the events. Meanwhile, Issam al-Attar embraced the confrontation and attributed it to himself, publishing his bank account numbers to collect donations for the Jihād, of course, from Germany!

Hafez al-Assad's regime was destabilized by the military strikes of the mujāhidīn from the Vanguard. He decided to confront and liquidate all factions of the Muslim Brotherhood, then expanded the confrontation to include the entire spectrum of the Islāmic Awakening, and even the entire religious segment of the country. The confrontation took the form of a war between the Sunnis, who are the majority of Muslims in Syria, and the Nusayri minority, called the Alawite sect, as the French named them during the occupation to confuse people about their true nature.

As a result of the mujāhidīn's victories on one hand, and the desire to reap the fruits of Hafez al-Assad's campaign against them on the other, the Muslim Brotherhood announced their entry into the war against the regime in late 1979, several months

after it erupted. They adopted the confrontation and began working to seize its leadership and wrest control from the Vanguard. Their policies played a major role—though not the only one—in aborting the armed Jihād against the regime in Syria.

Due to internal reasons, the policies of the Muslim Brotherhood, and government security strikes that succeeded in regaining the initiative, the Fighting Vanguard retreated. Most of its cadres were liquidated through killing and imprisonment. Those who remained were forced to leave for neighboring countries, where the Iraqi and Jordanian governments, then opposed to the Syrian regime, opened their doors to Syrian opposition members from all parts of the political spectrum.

The Muslim Brotherhood, led by Adnan Saʿid al-Din, managed to gain control of the leadership of the Jihādī revolution in Syria, drawing in the remnants of the Vanguard, Issam al-Attar's organization, and a large segment of scholarly groups in Syria under their leadership from 1980 onwards.

The Muslim Brotherhood led the Jihādī revolution in Syria on a path of comprehensive political and military failure until it was aborted in the bloody Hama confrontations of 1982. The military structures of all factions were destroyed, and Muslims suffered losses exceeding 50,000 deaths in one of the most extensive genocidal operations committed by an Arab government in the twentieth century.

Thus ended the Syrian Jihādī experience, which represents the most important and longest confrontational experience of the armed Jihādī current against apostate governments in the Arab and Islāmic world.

Allāh enabled this humble servant, the author of this book, to chronicle that important phase, during the period 1975–1985, in the book titled *The Jihādī Islāmic Revolution in Syria: Pains and Hopes*, which I wrote between 1985 and 1987, and

was published in Peshawar in late 1990. It contains a comprehensive record of that experience.

Allāh facilitated my accompaniment of that phase, as I had joined the Fighting Vanguard organization in early 1980. Then, after leaving Syria at the end of that year, I joined the Muslim Brotherhood organization in Syria, which had settled in Jordan, and worked in the organization's military apparatus. During the Hama uprising events of 1982, I was a member of the military command of the Muslim Brotherhood organization formed in Baghdad, composed of cadres from the military apparatus—of whom I was one—and the supreme political leadership of the Syrian Brotherhood. This enabled me to learn the hidden details of those events and the reasons for our defeat, which I recorded, along with a summary of its lessons, in my aforementioned book.

4. The Islamic International Movement in Algeria (1973–1976)

This was an armed Jihād movement founded and led in Algeria by the martyr Mustafa Bouyali. May Allāh have mercy on him, he was one of the mujāhidīn who participated in the Algerian revolution of liberation in 1954. When it led to independence in 1963, he found that secularists, communists, and socialists had dominated it and reaped the fruits of the Jihād of the Algerian people, which had lasted for more than a century. So, he founded that movement to resume the revolution and Jihād for the sake of implementing Allāh's Sharīʿah in Algeria.
He launched his movement during the era of President Chadli Bendjedid in 1973. I heard a recorded statement of his addressed to the head of state, commanding and prohibiting him, and threatening him with Jihād if he did not implement the Sharīʿah in Algeria. I also heard some tapes of him speaking about his Jihādī principles and warning the scholars of the regime. His movement did not last long, as he fell into an ambush by Algerian intelligence during an appointment with some arms dealers and was killed, may Allāh have mercy on him, in 1976. Some of his aides were martyred,

and others were arrested, tried, and imprisoned.
Some of his students tried to revive the movement after the Jihād against the government was launched following the military coup against the democratic process in 1991. They became a party in the attempt to unify the Armed Islāmic Group in 1993, before its schism and takeover by Takfiris, as will be indicated later, Allāh willing.

5. The Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt Experience (1975–2001)

I will summarize its experience based on the information I gathered about it by reviewing its literary heritage and my interaction with many of its pioneers and founders through the stages of Jihād in Afghanistan and during my stay in Europe. Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah was founded and became active in a number of Egyptian universities starting in 1975, following Sadat's policy of openness and allowing Islāmic groups space to operate, in order to limit the activity of leftist political currents that were growing at that time. Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah emerged with a methodology that bridged Qutbist thought and Salafi principles, making the application of Sharīʿah in Egypt the goal of its project. The group adopted a populist approach through its leadership's embrace of public daʿwah, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and applying some aspects of hisbah (moral policing) in certain areas. Its cells spread through mosques in Egypt. Its origin was primarily in Upper Egypt, where most of its leaders hailed from, but it extended to universities in Lower Egypt (the Nile Delta). Its leadership took Sheikh Dr. Umar Abd al-Rahman as its general emir, due to his known resolute stances—may Allāh relieve his distress—since the demise of Abdel Nasser, when he issued a fatwa against praying over Nasser upon his death, followed by several other stances during Sadat's era.

Following Sadat's treacherous visit to Israel and his announcement of the Camp David Accords and the program of peace and normalization with the Jews, Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah adopted a Jihādī intellectual orientation. One of its prominent

figures, the martyr Abd al-Salam Faraj, produced one of the most important Jihādī treatises of the modern era, the essay *Al-Farīḍah al-Ghāʾibah* (The Neglected Duty). Its significance stemmed from its inclusion of the most important contemporary fatwas on Jihād against the existing governments in Arab and Islāmic countries, including Egypt, ruling them as apostate and issuing fatwas for Jihād against them, fighting their soldiers and security men, and analogizing their situations to Ibn Taymiyyah's fatwas on fighting the Tatars and their Muslim collaborators, whether coerced or ignorant. This treatise was one of the most important early works that launched the contemporary Jihādī Salafi school of thought.

Then, Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah soon succeeded in carrying out the heroic operation and executed the treacherous President Anwar Sadat in the famous reviewing stand incident during the annual military parade in 1981, when Sadat came out to his people in his finery, and Allāh caused the earth to swallow him and his stand, leaving him dead. The operation was led by the martyr of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah and the martyr of Egypt and the contemporary Jihādī current, the heroic martyr Khalid al-Islambouli, may Allāh have mercy on him. This was part of a coup program against the government in Egypt, of which only the assassination of Sadat was successfully accomplished.

Following Hosni Mubarak's assumption of power after his deceased predecessor Anwar Sadat, Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah entered a war of attrition with the Egyptian government, which had laid out a plan to liquidate it by arresting its cadres and assassinating its leaders. It began this by assassinating one of its most prominent preachers, the martyr Alaa Mohieddin, and continued this policy, especially during the tenure of the notorious criminal Minister of Interior, Zaki Badr. Thus, the leadership of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah decided to enter a war of attrition, liquidations, and assassinations with the government, which had begun arrest campaigns within its ranks.

The leadership of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah in Egypt found in the Afghan Jihād against the Russians an excellent arena and an opportune chance to train its cadres, expand, and organize. It had a prominent presence in Peshawar, Pakistan, and in the Arab camps and fronts in Afghanistan. Among its prominent leaders present in Afghanistan were Sheikh Umar Abd al-Rahman, Sheikh Rifaʿi Taha, Brother Talʿat Fuad Qasim—may Allāh grant them all relief—Brother Muhammad al-Islambouli (brother of the martyr Khalid, the killer of Egypt's Pharaoh), and Brother Mustafa Hamza, among others. Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt offered a constellation of its finest sons and cadres as martyrs in the battle of Islām through the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan.

Following the security storms that swept Afghanistan and Pakistan at America's instigation after the fall of the communist regime in Kabul, Egyptian intelligence participated significantly in the security campaign against the Arab Afghans in cooperation with Pakistani intelligence. Most of the leaders and rank-and-file of the Egyptian Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah moved to Sudan based on an invitation and facilitation from the Salvation Government headed by Omar al-Bashir and Dr. Hassan al-Turabi's group, which opened the way and sought to accommodate Arabs in Sudan. Foremost among them were Sheikh Usama bin Laden and the two Egyptian armed groups: the Jihād Organization and Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah. They were promised an open field to operate from Sudan's northern borders with Egypt. Indeed, Al-Jamāʿah began field operations from there. Then, what happened to the Jihād Organization and others happened to them: they were asked to leave under threat of arms by Sudanese security when the "valiant men" decided to change their policy and bow to American policy and its Egyptian follower. The leaders of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah dispersed to several countries, most of them heading to Yemen. Under pursuit and campaigns to eliminate safe havens, their prominent figures headed to Iran, while some sought safe havens under the cover of political asylum in Europe. Among the most prominent who went to Iran were Sheikh Rifaʿi

Taha, Sheikh Mustafa Hamza, Sheikh Muhammad Shawqi al-Islambouli, and others. Meanwhile, among the most prominent who went to Europe were Abu Talal (Talʿat Fuad Qasim), who settled in Denmark, and Osama Rushdi, a member of Al-Jamāʿah's Shura Council. This was in late 1995.

Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt had good relations with the Khomeini current in the Iranian government due to its distinct position regarding the Iranian government, which differed from that of the entire Jihādī spectrum. It praised Iran's (Islāmic) revolutionary experience and lauded it in some of its literature. Some of its officials, including Dr. Umar Abd al-Rahman—may Allāh grant him relief—used to attend conferences organized by the Iranian government here and there. This provided them a bridge to a safe haven there during that period of fierce storms.

Although most, if not all, prominent leaders, symbols, and cadres of the Jihādī current, and many of its human base, began a semi-collective migration to Afghanistan during what I have termed the "second phase of the Arab Afghans" (1996–2001), the prominent leaders of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah who had settled in Iran preferred to stay there. They maintained a distinct, clear position that differed from the general orientation of the Jihādī current regarding Afghanistan. The most prominent features of this position were:

1. Not explicitly supporting the Taliban and not engaging in supporting them against the Northern Alliance, which consisted of former Afghan Jihād leaders. Indeed, they were wary of being drawn towards Afghanistan.

2. Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah clearly distanced itself, through its media outlets, especially its active website, from Bin Laden's orientations in his declared war against the Americans, unlike what the Jihād Organization, led by Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, did. When Al-Qaeda mentioned Al-Jamāʿah's cooperation with it, Al-Jamāʿah denied this in a statement refuting that claim.

3. Al-Jamāʿah adopted the principle of ceasing the call for armed confrontation with governments and announced a "unilateral initiative to stop violence in Egypt against the Egyptian government." This issue deserves attention because it steered Al-Jamāʿah in a different direction, taking it out of the entire Jihādī current's path, and left effects on it that transcend Al-Jamāʿah's specifics.

Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt and its Unilateral Initiative to Stop Violence with the Egyptian Government:

Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt was distinguished from the general Jihādī current by important intellectual differences that later reflected on its course. Among the most important of these differences were:

- Its adoption of an ideology that can be considered intermediate between the thought of the general "Islāmic Awakening" and the thought of the "Jihādī current" regarding issues of governance (ḥākimiyyah). They declared their conviction of the apostasy of the supreme ruler in Muslim countries that govern by other than what Allāh revealed, including Egypt, but they limited the ruling of apostasy to his person and did not extend it to his regime. Consequently, they did not deem fighting against his aides permissible under Sharīʿah except in self-defense.
- Al-Jamāʿah adopted the principle of binding consultation (shūrā) and collective leadership, taking Dr. Umar Abd al-Rahman as a nominal emir and symbol for the group.
- They also bypassed a Sharīʿah problematic concerning the conditions of "legitimate emirate," which opened a door for lengthy and wide-ranging debate between them, the Jihād Organization in Egypt, and other segments of the Jihādī current since the early nineties in Afghanistan. This was their adoption of the principle of the "validity of the leadership of a prisoner," as

was the case with the esteemed mujāhid Sheikh Dr. Umar Abd al-Rahman in America—may Allāh grant him relief. They also considered their historical leaders imprisoned in Egypt as active leaders participating in decisions based on the principle of binding consultation. I am not here to discuss the Sharīʿah legitimacy of the principle, but rather history records the role of these intellectual and methodological foundations in Al-Jamāʿah's subsequent path since the mid-nineties.

Excluding these two problematics, I can hardly find other major methodological differences (from a theoretical standpoint) in the methodology of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt compared to other schools of the Jihādī current, in terms of their Jihādī Salafi thought and their rejection, even takfīr (declaration of apostasy), of the "democratic methodology" in Islāmic work, while excusing Islamists who practiced it due to interpretation or otherwise, and so on regarding the components of contemporary Jihādī thought.
However, these methodological problematics placed Al-Jamāʿah, which had already entered into actual conflict with the Egyptian government, into practical difficulties. The members of its military apparatus found themselves facing the jurisprudential requirements of an offensive-defensive war of attrition in the arena of confrontation with the Egyptian regime and its security and intelligence men. This was on one hand. On another important hand, they found their leadership practically consisting of three main wings:

1. The imprisoned leaders in Egypt, whom they termed the "historical leadership."
2. The pursued political leaders abroad in exiles and safe havens.
3. The leaders of Al-Jamāʿah's military apparatus, whether inside or outside Egypt, who were waging a bloody military confrontation with Hosni Mubarak's regime. These methodological contradictions with practical

> dimensions quickly affected Al-Jamāʿah's path in the second half of the nineties and after the September events, as we shall see. To make matters worse, the military wing, led by Brother Abu Hazim (Mustafa Hamza), planned an operation that nearly assassinated President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa during an African conference. The operation failed, some members of the group were captured, and they recorded their confessions before being executed, may Allāh have mercy on them. This operation caused tremendous embarrassment for the Sudanese government, which had orchestrated the plans and logistically supported the operation from its territory, as well as for the leadership of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah. It further complicated matters.

The arrest of Dr. Umar Abd al-Rahman in the United States of America, where he had made a mistaken decision to reside with the aim of daʿwah, activism, and providing media and material support for Al-Jamāʿah, further exacerbated the situation. False charges were fabricated against him there following the first attack on the World Trade Center tower in New York, and he was sentenced to two hundred years in prison! All attempts to mitigate the sentence and defend him failed. There was a semi-official announcement by Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah's leadership that their de facto emir was Sheikh Abu Talal (Talʿat Fuad Qasim), who had settled as a political refugee in Denmark and adopted the principle of confrontation, alongside others from the hawkish wing within Al-Jamāʿah who supported the military apparatus led by Mustafa Hamza. This group included politicians like Sheikh Rifaʿi Taha and Sheikh Muhammad al-Islambouli, as well as some who had taken up the banner of fieldwork in the Jihād in Bosnia (1994–1995). They played an honorable role for Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt, which is considered one of the achievements of the contemporary Jihādī current.

This wing, committed to confrontation, clashed with an opposing wing that began to advocate for truce and an end to confrontation with the Egyptian government. This latter wing was represented by the imprisoned (historical) leaders and some of their leaders in Europe, most prominently Brother Osama Rushdi. This contradiction became public when this latter wing refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Luxor incident, where an active cell of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah in Egypt attacked a group of foreign tourists, killing and injuring dozens. The "imprisoned historical leaders" and some European leaders, notably Osama Rushdi, rushed to condemn this act and its perpetrators, deeming it a mistake. Osama Rushdi even went as far as to launch a blatant attack on the act and those behind it from Al-Jamāʿah's political and military leadership! He engaged in a literary confrontation even with senior figures among them, his own teachers, such as Sheikh Rifaʿi Taha, may Allāh grant him relief.

As I recall, the historical leaders in Egyptian prisons surprised the entire world with their project, known as the "unilateral initiative to stop violence" in Egypt, calling on the Egyptian government to reciprocate with measures to end the confrontation. The طرح (proposal/launch) of this initiative coincided with our early days in Afghanistan at the beginning of the "second phase of the Arab Afghans" there, under the Taliban, perhaps in late 1997.
I personally followed the stages and developments of this initiative with the most prominent leaders of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah present in Afghanistan, and with some of its senior figures who visited us from Iran, some of whom leaned towards residing in Afghanistan in mid-2000, as well as with the most prominent Jihādī symbols present there. This allows me to summarize the stages of that initiative in key points:

1. Some leaders of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah, imprisoned in Egypt since the events of Sadat's assassination, proposed, through their famous lawyer Mr.

Montasser al-Zayyat, an initiative memorandum declaring a unilateral cessation of armed action in Egypt, calling on the government to respond positively. The wing inclined towards this direction among Al-Jamāʿah's leaders in Europe, headed by Brother Osama Rushdi, quickly supported them.

2. The political and military leadership of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt abroad, especially the key figures in Iran and some in Afghanistan, were thrown into confusion. There was ambiguity regarding the position of the pursued field military command inside Egypt, which was directly engaged in military action, as well as the position of Dr. Umar Abd al-Rahman in his prison in America. However, Al-Jamāʿah's leaders in various factions, especially those opposing the initiative abroad, considered the unity of Al-Jamāʿah and the indivisibility of its stance above all other considerations, including methodological and principled ones. Nevertheless, signs of rejection of the initiative appeared among a number of Al-Jamāʿah's symbols, most prominently Sheikh Rifaʿi Taha, Brother Muhammad al-Islambouli, and Mustafa Hamza. Yet, everyone demonstrated unity of ranks and commitment to the majority opinion as a unified decision after consultations at all levels. However, some announced the freezing of their membership in Al-Jamāʿah's Shura Council due to their lack of conviction in this matter, as Sheikh Muhammad Shawqi al-Islambouli did.
3. The Egyptian government rewarded this initiative with rejection and a determination to continue the security confrontation. The prominent leader Sheikh Abu Talal (Talʿat Fuad Qasim) was abducted from Croatia while on his way to visit Al-Jamāʿah's leaders working in Bosnia. Some pursued individuals hiding inside Cairo were assassinated in their apartment under mysterious circumstances. Egyptian security services, media, and the Ministry of Interior announced the continuation of the pursuit of Al-Jamāʿah and their non-reciprocation of the initiative. This remained their declared

position until late 2003, when they partially responded to it, as will be discussed.

4. A collective decision crystallized within Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah, at the level of internal and external leadership, to adopt the initiative. The government's intransigence only made Al-Jamāʿah's leadership, whose emirate had apparently passed to Brother Abu Hazim (Mustafa Hamza), more insistent on the initiative! The historical (imprisoned) leaders and those of like mind among the external leaders supporting the initiative developed their position to a dangerous methodological level. They began issuing Sharīʿah research and intellectual studies to frame and theorize what they called "renouncing violence"! They started criticizing and finding fault with the principles upon which the foundations of Jihādī confrontation with apostate governments were built—principles they had previously filled the arena of Islāmic work with valuable Jihādī literature to establish. This literature, such as the treatise *Al-Farīḍah al-Ghāʾibah* (The Neglected Duty), Al-Jamāʿah's constitution and program *Mīthāq al-ʿAmal al-Islāmī* (Charter of Islāmic Action), *Al-Iʿtiṣām* (The Adherence), and *Ḥatmiyyat al-Muwājahah* (The Inevitability of Confrontation), and hundreds of articles that filled their famous newsletters like *Al-Murābiṭūn*, had occupied a fundamental part of Jihādī current's thought.

   Thus, books were issued by Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah under the banner of "Intellectual Revisions," which gradually degenerated in their intellectual and methodological retreats to enter the realm of doctrinal collapse in the fundamentals of the legitimate political principles of Jihādī and even Islāmic thought upon which the Awakening was based. They began by talking about the sanctity of the blood and property of non-Muslims in their lands, to their security in our lands, eventually reaching the call for cooperation with rulers in the battle against Israel and in the battle for economic development. Then

came flirtation and talk about returning to the field of peaceful daʿwah and perhaps legitimate political participation. It reached the point of declaring the deceased Sadat—whom the heroes of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah had the honor of assassinating on behalf of the Islāmic Ummah—a martyr killed unjustly; one of them even called him the "martyr of fitnah (sedition)!!" I have seen some of what was written in those books through excerpts promoted by the media, some mentioned by the lawyer Montasser al-Zayyat himself, through those governmental media platforms.

Regardless of commenting on the reasons, causes, and excuses that can be sought for the imprisoned leadership (lacking legitimacy and capacity in their prisons anyway), or for that pursued leadership, besieged in a circle of practical helplessness—disregarding all that for now—it can be said that Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt has definitively deviated from its intellectual identity and its methodology as a group within the Jihādī current.

I will leave the discussion of this matter (the principle of the initiative) from my perspective and the perspective of all Jihādīs. I will mention that during that period, we were able to meet in the shadow of the Taliban, study the matter, and hear the excuses and justifications from their proponents. Everyone rejected this initiative in its entirety, while maintaining full affection and respect for our brothers, their precedence, and their merit.

5. The Egyptian Jihād Organization, as previously mentioned, and the entire spectrum of the Jihādī current explicitly rejected the initiative and expressed this through the limited media means available during the period of residence with the Taliban, which was characterized by practical isolation from the world due to the siege on the Taliban and due to the Taliban's underdeveloped media policy.
6. The leaders of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah abroad were embarrassed by the successive collapses resulting from the initiative, but none of them could do

more than express their personal disagreement and their commitment to unity of ranks and the opinion of their historical leadership! This historical leadership constituted the main weight in the Shura Council, which decides by majority in a group that practically has no emir, whose members are scattered across the earth, and whose decisions are controlled by prisoners in Egypt and semi-free prisoners in political asylum havens in Europe!

7. Then the September events occurred! Those cadres of Al-Jamāʿah who remained and survived in Afghanistan departed to wherever they could. Perhaps Al-Jamāʿah's declared position, distant from the Taliban and Bin Laden, made it one of the least affected by the fierce storms that destroyed Al-Qaeda, the Arab Afghans, and most of the remaining bloc of the Jihādī current, as we mentioned earlier.
8. Then, in mid-2003, the Egyptian government surprised the world by partially responding to the initiative, six years after its launch. It began releasing batches of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah detainees. Several hundred were released, including Sheikh Karam Zuhdi, one of its historical leaders. Then other leaders were released. Those released from prison augmented their initiative with more books and methodological justifications to unravel their previous strong stance, like a woman who untwists her yarn after it has been spun strong. I heard from some media outlets about a book in which they evaluate their past experiences, titled *Nahr al-Dhikrayāt* (River of Memories). I have not been able to see it, but I read in the press about some of the calamities they are involved in. This group has practically joined Rumsfeld's program in the war of ideas and has become part of America's and the apostates' campaign to combat terrorism! Our repentant brothers, who turned from worshipping Allāh through Jihād against His enemies, did not forget to record their criticisms of the September events and their perpetrators. Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah's initiative became a subject of praise

in the intellectual counter-terrorism programs teeming in Arab media these days, and a point of reference and an example cited by Saudi scholars and others in combating the growing Jihādī manifestations in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere due to the recent American Crusader campaigns.
There is periodic talk about its leaders paving the way to propose the idea of resuming public daʿwah, whether as social institutions or as political parties that might obtain government licenses in the future.

9. In early 2004, the Egyptian President met the Iranian President on the sidelines of an international conference in Europe. Observers considered this a key to a new phase between the two countries. The two presidents declared their intention to normalize relations, which had deteriorated since the days of the Khomeini revolution when the Shah had sought refuge in Egypt, and subsequently Iran's reception of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah leaders and naming one of Tehran's main streets after the martyr Khalid al-Islambouli. After Khatami's return to his country, the Iranian government complied with Egypt's repeated request to cancel the naming of that street after al-Islambouli. Then, media outlets reported Iran's intention to hand over Egyptian detainees from among the Arab Afghans and Al-Qaeda members to the Egyptian government. Subsequently, it was mentioned that some Egyptian opposition figures residing in Iran had indeed been handed over to Egypt, and that others had fled to Afghanistan. I do not know the veracity of this news, nor if this affected the remaining leaders of Al-Jamāʿah there, and I have not been able to verify it.

This was a summary of the experience and conditions of that rich experience of Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah, up to the date of writing these lines in late 2004, based on my practical knowledge of it and my interactions and friendships with many of its leaders. If I were to summarize my opinion on that experience, I would do so in four

points:

(1) Fairness, (2) Justification, (3) Advice, (4) Hope.

As for fairness:

- I say that Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt, which I knew up close, came to an end by the close of the twentieth century, like most Jihādī groups and organizations belonging to the era of 1960–2001. They operated during that period, then faded, dissolved, were destroyed, or disintegrated from a practical standpoint. Then, the repercussions of the September events finished off what remained of them. Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah of Egypt, born in the mid-seventies, had practically dissolved and ended with the passing of the twentieth century and the beginning of the post-September world. Indeed, it preceded other groups in dissolving with its launch and pursuit of the initiative in that manner. This is from a practical perspective. As for the intellectual perspective, those who speak in its name today proclaim an ideology that I would not only say is different, but is contrary to and at war with the ideology they articulated in their books, which enriched their experience in Egypt and indeed enriched the entire Jihādī current.
  For the sake of honesty and history, it must be said explicitly: today, they condemn their path, apologize for their glories, consider them mistakes, and thereby chart a new course and methodology for themselves.
  As for the organizational aspect, the organization has vanished and fragmented. Most of its leaders have been killed, may Allāh have mercy on them, or captured, and news of them has ceased, may Allāh grant them relief. As for their human base, it has dissolved and ended.
  The only thing remaining is some cadres and historical leaders who are released from small prisons into the large prison fenced by the borders of Egypt, drawn by Sykes-Picot. There, they propose—we wish them guidance

and success—new ideas and projects that are linked to the Al-Jamāʿah al-Islāmiyyah we know only by name, if they even keep the name, which I doubt they will. For one of the conditions of the tyrants, according to our experience as an Islāmic Awakening, for anyone who wants to continue, is to dissociate from everything, even their name, and they demand it be changed, as happened in the experiences of Turkey, Tunisia, Algeria, and elsewhere. This is the first point of fairness.

- The second point is my great appreciation and respect for their experience. I knew many leaders and cadres of this organization. Truth be told, they are among the best Jihādī organizations in terms of piety, character, conduct, preparation, and upbringing; they are among the organizations that diligently nurtured their members. As for their methodology before the initiative, despite my disagreement with them on some Sharīʿah-political choices, it is one of the best methodologies presented in the Jihādī current and one of the most well-grounded. I recorded no fault against them in their past experience except their deviation in some cases from the foundational principles of their methodology due to certain organizational calculations and partisan interests, which they, like other organizations at the time, presumed to be beneficial. This occurred, for example, with some of them regarding the issue of Jihād in Algeria and their support for democracy, and the issue of not standing by the Taliban until a very late stage, when September 2001 caught everyone by surprise.

  As for their daʿwah, organizational, and military experience in Egypt, as well as their heritage and media production, these too were among the most magnificent, longest, and richest experiences of the contemporary Jihādī current, both inside and outside Egypt. Likewise, their role and valuable, qualitative contributions in Afghanistan against communism, and in Bosnia in repelling the aggressor from the Muslims.

On a personal level, I was connected to many of their leaders and members by ties of brotherhood, friendship, and a shared path of Jihād, migration, and neighborhood. They were an example of loyal brothers, friends, and neighbors. Indeed, as Imam Ibn al-Qayyim said when refuting some opinions of Imam Abu Ismaʿil al-Harawi in the book *Madārij al-Sālikīn* (The Ranks of the Wayfarers), I say: "Were it not that the right of Truth is more binding than the right of creation, there would have been scope and latitude for silence."
I ask Allāh to accept from them the best of what they did and to overlook any shortcomings, flaws, and slips, which are inherent in the actions of the children of Adam. He is indeed the Forgiving, the Merciful.

As for justification for what they brought about with the initiative, without my agreeing to it:

I say that the sacrifices made by this group throughout its history are immense by any measure, in terms of martyrs, detainees, and the pursued, and those who tasted affliction for the sake of Allāh, and Allāh is their reckoner. Most of the organization's leaders and rank-and-file were imprisoned. More than 90% of their prominent front-line leaders were arrested, with only a few escaping abroad as emigrants. Tens of thousands of their members and supporters were arrested, with only a small group escaping abroad as well. The organization practically transformed into an imprisoned organization, with most of its leadership and base captive. The detainees endured for two full decades, from Sadat's assassination (1981) to the end of the twentieth century, perhaps hoping their internal military apparatus or those who escaped abroad could achieve something. However, the general circumstances surrounding the confrontations of the Jihādī current with apostate regimes and the international powers behind them, led by America and its NATO allies, in what became known as the global war on terror, did not allow them or others to achieve qualitative results or any victory.
Furthermore, the Egyptian street, like the general Arab and Islāmic street, let them

down, just as it let down the Jihādī current in most places. This was due to many factors, stemming from general corruption, the impotence and confusion of the Islāmic Awakening in the paths of politics, the aversion of its leaders to Jihād, and the appalling decline of Muslim scholars in this era towards paths of hypocrisy or burrows of helplessness!

The Egyptian street, like others, did not respond in this confrontation; rather, it was practically drawn either to stand with the state or to sink into indifference. The mujāhidīn stood alone in the arena, for hundreds to be killed, tens of thousands to be imprisoned, and those who emigrated to be pursued. Homes were destroyed, women widowed, children displaced, and families disintegrated under the weight of poverty, destitution, need, and dispersion.

I believe that the physical and psychological torture endured by Al-Jamāʿah's leaders and members in Egypt's prisons—which have a long, dark history of confronting the Awakening through security, intellectual, and media means—in addition to the malicious role played by regime scholars in their debates with them under the supervision of state security agencies, had a profound impact on their catastrophic decision, called the "initiative to stop violence."

It is, in reality, an initiative and a decision by a group of captive prisoners, devoid of free will. Their decisions, opinions, and fatwas have no standing, neither according to Sharīʿah nor reason.

The proponent of such initiatives may be excused for what he misguides himself or others with, if the conditions of coercion are met. Our criticism is of the principle of the initiative and its content, not of all the imprisoned proponents. The principle is rejected entirely. The brothers are generally excused, and Allāh knows best, unlike those among them who were not imprisoned and who took on the primary responsibility for this deviation from their havens in Europe. Even what they produced after their release from prison, I view with the same perspective and method: rejection of the deviation and excusing the genuinely coerced deviant

among them. They are still prisoners within the large prison (Egypt) within its walled borders, which, along with others, is now surrounded by an even larger prison in the post-September world, across the entire globe, under American supervision. We ask Allāh for steadfastness on the truth and resolve for righteousness.

As for hope:

It lies in the emergence from the remnants of this group, from the loins of these mujāhidīn, and from their followers, those who will complete the path—the path of Jihād and resistance in the days to come—to carry the banner, and those who will complete the journey in the land of Kinanah (Egypt), the most important fortress of confrontation in Muslim lands against these advancing Crusader-Jewish campaigns.

As for advice:

To these brothers of ours, and to everyone who is swept away to fall into such pitfalls and abysses set by tyrants, their aides, and their jurists on the path of those journeying to Allāh today, I will be brief.

Allāh Almighty says:

{And fitnah is worse than killing. And they will not cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion if they are able. And whoever of you reverts from his religion [to disbelief] and dies while he is a disbeliever – for those, their deeds have become worthless in this world and the Hereafter, and those are the companions of the Fire, they will abide therein eternally.} (Al-Baqarah 2:217).

And He, the Mighty and Majestic, says:

*{Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]? And he who turns back on his heels will never harm Allāh at all; but Allāh will reward the grateful. * And it is not [possible] for one to die except by permission of Allāh at a decree determined. And whoever desires the reward of this world – We will give him*

*thereof; and whoever desires the reward of the Hereafter – We will give him thereof. And We will reward the grateful. * And how many a prophet [fought and] with him fought many religious scholars. But they never lost assurance due to what afflicted them in the cause of Allāh, nor did they weaken or submit. And Allāh loves the steadfast. * And their words were not but that they said, "Our Lord, forgive us our sins and the excess [committed] in our affairs and plant firmly our feet and give us victory over the disbelieving people." * So Allāh gave them the reward of this world and the good reward of the Hereafter. And Allāh loves the doers of good. * O you who have believed, if you obey those who disbelieve, they will turn you back on your heels, and you will become losers. * But Allāh is your protector, and He is the best of helpers.}* (Āl ʿImrān 3:144-150).

Glory be to Allāh the Almighty! This Qurʾān was revealed for us and among us. And the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, as narrated by Al-Bukhari:

"Khabbab ibn al-Aratt said: We complained to the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings be upon him, while he was reclining on his cloak in the shade of the Kaʿbah. We said to him, 'Will you not seek help for us? Will you not pray to Allāh for us?' He said, 'Among those before you, a man would be taken, a pit would be dug for him in the earth, and he would be placed in it. Then a saw would be brought and placed on his head, and he would be sawn in two, yet that would not deter him from his religion. And he would be combed with iron combs between his flesh and bones or nerves, yet that would not deter him from his religion. By Allāh, this matter will be completed until a rider travels from Sana'a to Hadhramaut fearing none but Allāh, or a wolf for his sheep, but you are too hasty.'"

The Messenger of Allāh spoke the truth. It is as if the Ḥadīth speaks of some mujāhidīn of this age. We ask Allāh for well-being.

I believe that in the words of Allāh, and the saying of His Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, there is sufficient admonition and advice.

It would have been acceptable for these brothers of ours, if they felt they were besieged and had no strength to continue, to surrender and raise the white flag, to announce a halt to their confrontation with the Egyptian regime, and to seek a truce or reconciliation on terms suiting their situation. But it is not their right, nor anyone's right, to invalidate the methodology itself, and to untwist the strong yarn after it has been spun. It is not their yarn, nor the yarn of their father and mother! Rather, it is the yarn of the Muslims, the yarn of the entire ancient Jihādī current, and the heritage of thousands upon thousands of martyrs and patient ones who met their Lord while steadfast upon it, in Egypt and outside Egypt.

As was narrated from the Imam of Ahl al-Sunnah, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, when some well-wishers approached him to persuade him to answer Al-Muʿtasim under duress during the tribulation (miḥnah) to spare himself affliction, reminding him of his dependents, he said: "If this is your intellect, O so-and-so, then I am relieved." He then pointed to a crowd of people and students of knowledge waiting at the door of his prison to write down his fatwa, and said to him: "Shall I save myself and misguide these people?!" He, may Allāh have mercy on him, did not permit dissimulation (taqiyyah) for one who was a leading figure followed in religion, and he used to say: "There is no taqiyyah except under the sword."

As for one who surrenders—under any interpretation or pretext, we ask Allāh for well-being—to become a tool in the hands of tyrants and the media apparatuses of enemies at home and abroad to discourage those still treading the path of Jihād and resistance, and even to insult them and critique their methodology by distorting the Qurʾān and Sunnah, then no, by Allāh, and there is no dignity here for anyone.

The least required of these brothers of ours, and of anyone forced into a similar situation, if they withdraw from the caravan, is to hold their tongues, let their homes suffice them, weep over their sins, and ask Allāh for steadfastness for those who remain firm, and for themselves a second chance to compensate for what was lost. We ask Allāh to forgive them, make them firm on the truth, and raise from among

them, their followers, and their brothers those who will raise the banner of truth and restore the banner to its honor and status.
Regarding my experience and companionship with the brethren from this group during my Jihād phase in Afghanistan, and in London in between, it enabled me to become acquainted with remarkable examples of mujāhidīn in this era. I developed bonds of brotherhood and friendship with many of them from various levels; they were indeed sincere brethren and loyal neighbors.

As I previously noted, a characteristic of this group's cadres is the excellent upbringing and training of its members, and the strength of brotherhood and a bond among them based on truth—and sometimes even on falsehood! I had the opportunity to meet many of this group's sheikhs and cadres, such as the mujāhid, scholar, and role model Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman—may Allāh relieve his distress and grant him release. Also Sheikh Abu Yasir (Rifa'i Taha)—may Allāh grant him release; Sheikh Mustafa Hamza; Sheikh Ahmed Shawqi al-Islambouli, and others—may Allāh Almighty protect them. It was an opportunity to know exemplary, active mujāhidīn. May Allāh have mercy on those who have met Him and gather us with them in the highest Paradise, and may He protect those who remain and benefit His religion and His obedient servants through them.

6. Jihādī Attempts in Tunisia from the Mid-1980s

The contemporary form of the Islamic awakening in Tunisia dates back to the mid-1970s, when Sheikh Rachid Ghannouchi and a number of his fellow Islamists founded a movement known as the Islamic Tendency Movement in Tunisia. Like other phenomena of the Islamic awakening during that period, it began on foundations very similar to the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood, with an added Tunisian characteristic owing to the roots of the Islamic awakening in Tunisia.

The Islamic Tendency Movement in Tunisia encompassed multiple intellectual dimensions: some were focused on proselytization, some political, some educational, and some Jihādī, the latter represented by Sheikh Dr. Salih Karkar—may Allāh protect him, relieve his suffering, and accept his deeds.

The Islamic Tendency Movement engaged in numerous political confrontations with the regime of its former president, Habib Bourguiba. Its leaders were imprisoned, its newspapers shut down, and its activities banned more than once. In its later days, it leaned towards the democratic option and engaging with the authorities through elections. Meanwhile, its secret military apparatus, composed of a number of officers from various branches of the Tunisian army, had a program to prepare for a military coup that would, as they envisioned, bring the Islamists to power. This program represents the most significant attempt at a serious Jihādī endeavor in Tunisia to overthrow the existing regime. Although this attempt cannot be considered one of the Jihādī current's experiences due to the intellectual identity of Ghannouchi's group, I will provide an overview of it in this section, considering that the officers who undertook it held Jihādī views closer to the Jihādī current's ideology than to the movement's general mixed political character. This became clear to me after getting to know some of them personally.

Alongside the Islamic Tendency Movement, there were some small cells, not exceeding a few individuals to my knowledge, of youth who embraced Salafī Jihādī thought. They carried out a number of primitive, simple, and inexperienced operations, which led to the martyrdom of some, the arrest of others, and the flight of a few individuals out of Tunisia. Among them was Sheikh Ali al-Azraq—may Allāh have mercy upon him—who issued them a fatwa on Jihād and the legitimacy of targeting the state and all its structures. Following the failure of that attempt, the Sheikh fled to Saudi Arabia, which extradited him to Tunisia in the mid-1980s. There, he was executed, may Allāh have mercy upon him, having surpassed seventy

years of age, while reciting the two testimonies of faith and proclaiming Allāh's greatness in a Tunisian prison, as related to me by some Tunisian brethren who lived through that period.

As for the coup attempt by the Islamic Tendency Movement, or what later became known as the Ennahda Party under the leadership of Sheikh Rachid Ghannouchi, its summary, as conveyed to me orally by some of the officers who planned and supervised it, is as follows:

- Despite the methodological confusion and disarray that characterized the Islamic Tendency Movement and its first tier of leadership since its inception, its beginnings were marked by revolutionary, coup-oriented thought, boldness, and a broad political vision, reflecting the intellectual and psychological makeup of Sheikh Rachid Ghannouchi.

- The movement had an ambitious institutional vision, concerned with establishing cadres and organizational structures for an organization aspiring to overthrow a regime and inherit it at all levels. Therefore, the movement had programs in various fields: political, educational, economic, media, etc. Among the apparatuses it established was the movement's military wing.

- The military apparatus's plan was primarily based on embedding a number of volunteer officers within the Tunisian army across its three branches: land, air, and naval forces. It also involved recruiting officers with Islamic inclinations within the army. Regardless of the minor details, the organization was well-structured and extremely clandestine within a secular army that prohibited its members from religious observance, monitored even the whispers of worshippers and the praises of believers, and considered such

acts grounds for suspicion leading at least to dismissal from the army.

- The young officers, members of this apparatus, adhered to utmost secrecy based on fatwas obtained from the organization's jurists and those they consulted, adopting behavior that concealed any indication of their religious commitment. They prayed secretly; indeed, if prayer time coincided with lessons or training, they would pray by gesturing. They fasted only if they could do so secretly. The level of concealment even reached the point where their wives wore modest clothing but were permitted to uncover their heads due to the necessity of their situation.

Then, the organization proceeded for about ten years according to its plan, which was primarily based on the idea of a military coup to overthrow the authorities.

- According to one of my officer friends who supervised the coup preparations, the program was meticulous and ambitious (its detailed specifics are now with the enemies, allowing some to be mentioned for informational purposes). It managed to establish connections with neighboring countries and coordinate its program at a high level. If my memory serves me correctly, the execution time was set for 1986, after Bourguiba's government had overturned the Islamic Tendency's victory by rigging the elections after their initial-stage win had astonished observers, given Tunisian society's known disengagement from religious commitment and the prevalence of secularist doctrines and adherents of Frenchification and Westernization. However, it became apparent in Tunisia as well that a spirit of authenticity, sympathy for the Islamic faith, and trust in its political project characterized, and still characterizes, all Arab and Islamic societies without exception.

- According to relevant narrators, the weakness and hesitation of a university professor from the civilian section of the organization, who was in contact with the leadership of the coup-plotting officers, led to the discovery of the attempt shortly before its planned execution. The Minister of Interior at the time, who is the current president, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, swiftly launched a "white" coup in cooperation with American intelligence, the security services administration, and some political figures within the regime. Bourguiba was then isolated under the pretext of senility and ill health and moved to an isolated palace to live out the rest of his delirium and senility until he perished. Most of the coup plotters had been arrested, and those who could, fled.

- Because Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had hastily arranged his alternative coup, he feared the deep roots of the Islamist coup attempt. He was compelled to strike a deal with Rachid Ghannouchi and his political leaders, under which it was agreed to release the detained officers in exchange for the group's recognition of the new regime and its cessation of efforts to overthrow the authorities.

- Thus, about two hundred Islamist coup-plotting officers were released. Most of them went into voluntary exile in several European countries, seeking political asylum. Similarly, most of the civilian leadership of the organization, headed by Sheikh Rachid Ghannouchi, left for Western countries.

- After that failure, the Ennahda group and Sheikh Rachid himself veered to the opposite extreme in political methodology, adopting democratic proposals, or what they call the renunciation of violence. Sheikh Rachid made London his base for activities across Europe, adopting an ideology and conduct consistent with Western standards of Islamic moderation, which is not the subject of

discussion here. He began this by publishing his book "Political Freedoms in Islām," in which he violated many established tenets of the Islamic faith under the pretext of an innovative approach of openness and moderation, reaching the point of denying and annulling information necessarily known from the religion.

- Thus, the only serious contemporary attempt to establish Islamic rule in Tunisia faded away.

- Sheikh Salih Karkar was arrested in France and has been under house arrest for approximately fifteen years, and remains so, for fear that he would continue his Jihādī activities and aspirations, as he represented a serious Jihādī current within the Islamic Tendency Movement in Tunisia. May Allāh grant him release.

- As for the Jihādī current and its cells in Tunisia, the arrival of some Tunisian Jihādī youth in the Afghan arena in the late 1980s and early 1990s led some of them to try to form nuclei for Jihādī gatherings. Repeated, unsuccessful attempts were made to merge these small groups into a unified organization, similar to what the Libyans and Algerians among the Arab Afghans had done. All these attempts failed due to the lack of qualified cadres among those sincere young men who could undertake such a task.

- When the Arab Afghans dispersed in 1992, some Tunisian mujāhidīn traveled to Sudan, attempting this unification once again, but to no avail. Others journeyed to political asylum havens in Europe, leaving fragmentation as a persistent characteristic of the Jihādīs among the Tunisian brethren, despite

the presence of sincere and good elements among them.

As for the Islamist officers in Europe, they were worn down by the demands of life under siege and pursuit by the Tunisian regime, and by the assimilation attempts practiced upon them by the Ennahda Party abroad, led by Ghannouchi, which reached the extent of material and moral blockade. Some were eventually forced to submit and join Ghannouchi's organization for material and psychological reasons. Some of the steadfast, estranged individuals among them remained withdrawn, unable to find a way out or a path forward, like many of the oppressed and displaced Jihādīs and Islamists in Europe at the end of the twentieth century.

- With the beginning of the second phase for the Arab Afghans in Afghanistan during the Taliban era, among the Arab mujāhidīn who turned towards the Islamic Emirate was a group of Tunisian mujāhidīn. Some of them had earned the honor of participating in the Jihād in Bosnia against Serbian attacks and the war of extermination in the mid-1990s. They initiated a new attempt to establish a Jihādī gathering specific to them. Some signs of success appeared in this endeavor despite stumbling, fragmentation, and the virus of extremism and takfīr that afflicted some Tunisian mujāhidīn brethren and hampered these promising attempts. Some of the mature individuals among them managed to establish an independent camp for themselves and an administration of a decent standard, cooperating with cadres from other groups. They provided valuable training services to the Arab contingent during the Taliban era.

- However, while the brethren were preoccupied with their endeavor, destiny had other plans. The September 11th explosions in New York and Washington reverberated, their shrapnel reaching Afghanistan, as we have

discussed. The American "crusade" arrived in December 2001, leading the Tunisian mujāhidīn to take up their positions on a distinguished front in the peaks of Tora Bora in the Sulaiman Mountains, west of Jalalabad, alongside their brethren, as the entire Arab presence in Afghanistan was targeted by the offensive. News arrived of their heroic steadfastness in their positions alongside their brethren in the battle of self-defense and defense of the Islamic Emirate.

- Although the Tunisian brethren's goal was to bring Jihād back to Tunisia and establish a Jihādī organization to unite them, and their attention was focused on reviving their connections with their brethren in exile and securing the requirements for advancing this gathering; and although they did not pay much attention to the Taliban's battle and the Islamic Emirate, and were hesitant to engage with it as a legitimate Sharīʿah imamate in Afghanistan due to some reservations they had and their focus on their own project; and although they were not convinced by the attempts of Bin Laden and al-Qāʿidah and their uni-directional military orientations, as was the case with most Arab organizations and gatherings in Afghanistan; nevertheless, the American onslaught imposed itself on everyone.

- Thus, the mujāhidīn of Tunisia fulfilled their duty, stood firm like heroes, and dozens among them fell as martyrs and prisoners, like others. Given their originally small number, and the few I believe survived the September chasm, I think those Tunisian attempts have faded, awaiting Allāh to prepare a new generation of mujāhidīn for Tunisia. Allāh's mercy is vast, and the womb of this Ummah is still fruitful.

- On a personal level, I knew many of those brethren, the Arab Afghans from Tunisia. I also became acquainted in Europe with many of the officer brethren whose experience I briefly mentioned. I also had bonds of friendship with many of them. Cooperation also developed between me and the Tunisians who came to Afghanistan during the Taliban era.

- I still carry fond memories from those bonds. May Allāh have mercy on their martyrs and relieve their prisoners. May their living be remembered well and protected. They were an example of kindness, sincerity, pure innate nature, and diligence in their work, despite their recent experience and limited resources.

7. The Experience of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG): (1990 - 2001)

According to my information, there was an early Jihādī attempt by the initial cells of the Jihādī current in Libya against Muammar Gaddafi's regime during the latter half of the 1980s. The discovery and pursuit of these cells led to the departure of their main cadres to Afghanistan, where the Arab Jihādī gathering during the Afghan Jihād had begun to reach its peak. There, in the training camps scattered across Afghanistan and on the Pakistani border, this constellation of young Libyans spared no effort in training their initial cadres in various fields of instruction and re-establishing their connections with Libya and some diaspora countries. They mobilized those of their brethren whom they could to come for preparation and training to continue the path of Jihād in Libya. Those young men were known to be among the Arab mujāhidīn present in that arena who made the most of their time and patiently endured the long-term military and educational training courses they subjected themselves and their brethren to. During the last three years (1989-1992), those young men managed to organize themselves and establish the

organization known as the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group. They laid out a program for preparation and the resumption of the Jihādī march in their country, based on the ideas, principles, and methods prevalent at that time within the Jihādī current and the Arab Afghans. They were able to absorb most of the Libyan mujāhidīn who were present in the Arab Afghan arena.

- The Libyan mujāhidīn efficiently participated in the activities of the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan alongside their brethren from other countries. Cadres soon emerged from among them in the fields of training and on the front lines. Then, the youth of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group established their own guesthouses and a special camp, like most of the established or emerging Arab Jihādī groups. They then pledged allegiance to an amīr for the organization, and their administrative structure began to form as a Jihādī organization that started to take its place among the prominent Arab Jihādī organizations.

- The intellectual methodology of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group was based on the principles of prevailing Jihādī thought. They were influenced by the methodologies of the Egyptian Islamic Group and the Egyptian Jihād Organization, and can be considered a model of Salafī Jihādī groups. This became evident when they published their intellectual methodology in a book titled "The Broad Outlines of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group." It was also manifested later through their monthly newsletter, "Al-Fajr," as well as in a number of intellectual, political, and Sharīʿah-based research papers they issued.

- With the security storm brewing against Arabs in Pakistan under the American program, and with most Arab mujāhidīn returning to their home countries, members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group were among those

who could not return to their country, similar to wanted Jihādīs from Syria, Egypt, Tunisia, Iraq, and some other countries. Consequently, most of the youth from the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group relocated to Sudan after the Bashir regime and its ally Turabi opened Sudan's doors to Islamists and Jihādīs following their assumption of power in 1990, as mentioned earlier. Meanwhile, a few of them headed towards political asylum havens in some European and Western countries.

- The period of residence in Sudan (1991-1995) is considered an important foundational stage for the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group. It enabled them to re-establish their connections with Libya. The group also developed an ambitious program for training cadres in various fields, especially in seeking Sharīʿah knowledge. Many of them went to seek knowledge in the Land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries (Saudi Arabia), while others headed towards Mauritania. Indeed, by the time the second phase of the Arab Afghans in Afghanistan began (1996-2000), the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group had cultivated a number of the finest Sharīʿah-trained scholarly cadres to emerge from the Jihādī current and the Arab Afghans.

- A number of Libyan Arab Afghan cadres who had not joined the Fighting Group were working in al-Qāʿidah's training camps. They had moved to Sudan, continuing their work with Sheikh Osama bin Laden in the agricultural and economic ventures he had initiated there. However, the activities of the Fighting Group and other Islamists and Jihādīs inside Libya against Gaddafi's regime, especially their movements in Sudan close to Libya, alarmed Colonel Gaddafi's regime. This pushed him to conclude an extradition treaty and establish a program to combat Islamist elements with Bashir's (Islamist) regime. Soon, Bashir's regime turned its back on all Arab Afghans, beginning

with the Libyans. The Sudanese government requested the Fighting Group organization to leave Sudan. It also asked Sheikh Osama to remove the Libyans in his employ from his fields of work due to Libyan pressure and new agreements with them. There was no alternative, and this led to the beginning of the Libyans' departure from Sudan, forcing them to redeploy in the region anew. The deportation of those among them who were with al-Qāʿidah led to their joining the Fighting Group organization, thereby adding important cadres to it, as the Fighting Group was keen on being the sole Jihādī organization in Libya and made diligent efforts towards this, both inside and outside Libya.

- As I mentioned, the cadres and members of the Fighting Group dispersed across several countries in the region. Some returned to Pakistan, while others spread out in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, the Gulf, and some North African countries. Others headed to political asylum havens in some Western countries, where the environment and the availability of information and communication helped them in the field of propaganda and media.

- With the spark of Jihād igniting in Algeria from 1993, the Fighting Group hastened to be present in this important arena, both for its own sake and due to its proximity to Libya. It dispatched a few dozen of its mujāhidīn to be present there and participate with their brethren in the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in the Jihād against the Algerian regime. However, it was an exceedingly bitter experience. Intelligence penetrations, the dominance of ignorant and takfīrī elements, and their manipulation by intelligence services led to deviants gaining control over the GIA leadership in Algeria. This pushed the GIA into the labyrinths of deviation and fragmentation, as we will discuss in

the following overview when addressing the Algerian experience, Allāh willing. What concerns us here is that the criminal administration of the GIA, under the leadership of Abu Abd al-Rahman Amin from 1995 onwards, added to its list of crimes the assassination of most of these foreign mujāhidīn from the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group—may Allāh have mercy on them. This was done under the pretext that they held the ideology of innovators and were not upon the correct Salafī creed. Only a very few of them survived, those who managed to flee to the areas of other organizations, to emerge as witnesses to that dangerous deviation that occurred in Algeria. And to Allāh belongs the command, before and after.

- In 1994, the Fighting Group began its military activity in Libya across three fronts:

    1. Urban guerrilla warfare within Libya against key figures of the Libyan government.
    2. Positioning of some wanted elements in the Jebel Akhdar (Green Mountain) region in eastern Libya to conduct mountain and rural guerrilla warfare in its vicinity.
    3. Attempted assassination of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.

However, the strategic realities of a country like Libya were not conducive to such a movement. The population is small, Libya is a vast, sprawling desert country with major cities scattered over great distances and concentrated in a narrow coastal strip. Additionally, the timing of this attempt was unfavorable, as Arab, regional, and international coordination to combat Jihādī groups had already begun. This made coordination between operations management inside and outside Libya impossible, and the movement of elements to and from Libya became fraught with danger and almost unfeasible. The tyrant's regime in Libya quickly inflicted heavy losses on the

mujāhidīn, despite the exceptional and heroic operations carried out by their members during that period against security services, army elements, and government militias.

Thus, its cells in Jebel Akhdar were eliminated, and the martyred leader, brother Abd al-Rahman Hattab, was killed. A number of martyrs fell in various cities, and others were arrested. The Fighting Group was forced to announce a change in its military program, declaring in its statements what it termed a program of "strategic offensive and tactical retreat." Thereafter, its activity was practically limited to the last front only: repeated attempts to assassinate Colonel Gaddafi, though fate did not decree the end of that vile tyrant. Many attempts failed, and Gaddafi miraculously survived time after time. The group was forced to effectively end its activity in Libya.

- Since 1995, the storms of the "global war on terror," as they called it, were rapidly escalating to hunt down all Jihādīs everywhere. Regional, Arab, and international security cooperation and coordination caused many cadres of the Jihādī current to fall victim to these unjust security campaigns, which aimed to close safe havens, dry up financial sources, and pursue key elements for assassination, capture, or extradition to their home countries. The Fighting Group's share of tribulation during this phase was also not insignificant. Authorities in Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Yemen, and Sudan pursued a number of cells belonging to this organization. Some were arrested and handed over to Libya, as happened in Sudan, Jordan, Syria, and Turkey. Others were arrested in those countries, deported, or disappeared under extreme duress in their locations or elsewhere. Refugees among them in Western countries, like other Islamists in general and Jihādīs in particular, faced siege and restrictions.

- With the Taliban movement succeeding in controlling Afghanistan and declaring the Islamic Emirate in the spring of 1996, cadres of Arab Afghans began to journey to the new haven. Despite the arrival of many vanguards of Jihādī and Arab organizations and cadres in Afghanistan, especially former Arab Afghans, the leadership of the Fighting Group appeared hesitant to join this new sanctuary and cautious about the idea of re-gathering all the Jihādī current's assets in one basket in Afghanistan a second time. I was among the first to go to Afghanistan during that phase, and among those who urged them and everyone else to come, to consolidate forces, and to launch anew from there. Those who hesitated were considered mistaken in their reluctance. However, what happened in September and its subsequent repercussions on the Jihādī current now make me think that their hesitation and caution might have been well-placed at the time. But destiny had another path and will. They were threatened in their havens, and no one could have imagined September and its consequences. The Taliban's success in extending its control over most of Afghanistan, and the new honor met by the Arab Afghans who came under their protection on one hand, and the security crackdowns that swept through the cells of the Fighting Group and other Jihādīs in more than one place as I mentioned, forced the hesitant to join Afghanistan out of fear and aspiration: fear of the blaze of security storms in various parts of the world, and aspiration to benefit from the realities of the new arena and sanctuary. Prominent cadres from the leadership of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group organization successively arrived in the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan, like others.

- Initially, the Fighting Group hesitated to involve its cadres in the Taliban's lengthy battles with the Northern Alliance, fearing entry into a war of attrition that was not part of its program on one hand, and perhaps due to its

conviction not yet having crystallized at that stage to engage in the Taliban's battle, and its uncertainty regarding the legitimacy of the Amir al-Mu'minin as a possible legitimate Imām under whose authority it is permissible to enter. However, after studying the situation in early 1999, they gradually began to align themselves with the Taliban government. It was not long before they played an important role in supporting them in various fields, especially in the military and media spheres.

- During the second phase of the Arab Afghans in Afghanistan, the Fighting Group was one of the best Arab groups in terms of organization and performance among the Arab Afghans and their gatherings and groups, which numbered around fourteen organized entities, independent camps, and assemblies. They had an independent camp and more than one guesthouse and activity center.

- During that period, it seemed that the shadows of the globalized world, which had begun to seep into the thinking of Jihādīs as well, had found their way to the Fighting Group in terms of non-Libyan elements and attention to more than one cause and arena. This was despite their Libyan national focus remaining clear and inherent in all their activities, administrative structure, and media production.

- Sheikh Osama's and al-Qāʿidah's attempts to sway the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group towards their orientations of unifying the front of confrontation against America did not succeed. Nor could they absorb them into their alliance, which they named the "World Islamic Front for Jihād Against Jews and Crusaders." This front, in the end, over five years, only attracted the Egyptian Jihād Organization led by Sheikh Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri. It seems

the main reasons for this were related to methodological issues, administrative matters, and reasons connected to the nature of the orientation, strategic goal, and practical effort focus of each group. Thus, the Fighting Group organization remained independent in its programs and activities in the Arab Afghan arena until their final days.

- Then came September 11th. The Fighting Group, like other Arab Jihādī gatherings, was immersed in its activities and tireless movement; indeed, it was perhaps the most prominent in activity and performance.

The fierce American onslaught by air, advancing by land in cooperation with traitors from the Northerners, riffraff from various parties, and highway robbers, forced all Arab Afghans to enter a battle of self-defense and defense of the Islamic Emirate, and of the Amir al-Mu'minin and his government, which was beginning to crumble on more than one front.

- The mujāhidīn from the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group took their positions in that battle and fought valiantly in the defense of the lines north of Kabul. Another faction of theirs was stationed in the southern region in Kandahar and Helmand. Many among them fell as martyrs, and their leaders and senior cadres were at the forefront of the fighters. Some of their leaders and cadres also played a prominent role later in successive battles in more than one location. Eventually, those who survived the shelling and those battles were forced to withdraw towards Pakistan. One of their leaders, Sheikh Abu al-Layth, took command of groups resisting the Americans on the Pakistani border with Afghanistan from that time until now—may Allāh protect him. Then, the Fighting Group's share of affliction, like that of other Arab Afghan mujāhidīn, was also considerable. Many of its members and cadres were

taken prisoner due to the betrayals of the Pakistani government, army, and security forces—may they receive from Allāh what they deserve. Some were killed, and others were handed over as prisoners to America, the leader of the Crusader campaigns.

- The losses of the Fighting Group, like those of other components of the Arab Jihādī current and the Arab Afghans, were devastating: killed, captured, and displaced. Their surviving cadres returned, along with other surviving cadres of the Jihādī current, as the strangers of the modern era who escaped the September chasm, to be dispersed and hidden in the lands of the earth once more. May Allāh have mercy on the martyrs, grant relief to the prisoners, and deliver His oppressed servants on earth everywhere, and realize for them His certain promise of victory, relief, and empowerment.

I was connected to the brethren in the Fighting Group by bonds of friendship, brotherhood, and relations of cooperation and work on several occasions and in various fields. The most important of these was during my stay in London, where I wrote a number of Jihādī intellectual articles for their magazine, Al-Fajr. There was also fruitful cooperation between us in exposing the deviation of the Armed Islamic Group in Algeria starting from late 1995. This cooperation with them and with the Egyptian Jihād Organization led to the declaration of disavowal of its actions by most Jihādī blocs at the time, as will be detailed later, Allāh willing. Good cooperation also took place between us during the "second phase of the Arab Afghans" in the days of the Taliban. Then, our paths converged in an attempt to repel the calamity that descended after the September events, before leaving Afghanistan. Indeed, I believe that the Fighting Group constituted a fundamental pillar in the Jihādī current and had a distinguished presence in terms of production and impact. I believe that its leaders and students of knowledge, as well as its cadres

and members, were among the most competent and dedicated men of the Jihādī current, and among the most well-educated and qualified.

May Allāh accept from them, grant them the best reward, and gather us and them in the abode of His mercy with the Prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous, and excellent are those as companions.

8. Contemporary Jihādī Experiences in Algeria from (1991)

I have previously explained that an early Jihādī experience was undertaken by the martyred mujāhid Sheikh Mustafa Bouyali—may Allāh have mercy on him—in the first half of the 1970s. The martyr Bouyali was among the mujāhidīn who fought against French colonialism in Algeria. Like hundreds of thousands of mujāhidīn at the time, he aspired to liberation from colonialism under the banner of Jihād, so that Islamic rule would subsequently be established in Algeria. However, the French, who mastered the game of independence as they had mastered the game of colonialism, ensured that power would pass after them to secularists and socialists from among the sons of Algeria who had been raised on the ideas of Islām's enemies! This was a reason for the accumulation of disbelief and injustice that prompted our martyr Mustafa Bouyali to revolt against it.

However, that experience was quickly suppressed, its leader was martyred, and the remaining dozens of its affiliates were imprisoned for several years.

In the late 1980s, after economic problems in Algeria worsened due to rampant corruption that had spread throughout all joints of the system and its administration, the "bread riots," as they were known at the time, erupted, and the situation was on the verge of explosion. The Algerian President at the time, Chadli Bendjedid, resorted to remedying the situation by proposing a policy of openness,

announcing the licensing of political party formation, and calling for free democratic elections in 1989.

Some proponents of the Islamic awakening, which had been severely suppressed since independence in 1963 under President Houari Boumediene, seized this initiative. Sheikh Abbasi Madani and a group of those who responded to the call announced the formation of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) to create a broad coalition encompassing all those striving for the Islamic political project. The Front managed to include most circles of the Islamic awakening, and millions of people joined its open membership, regardless of their conditions or inclinations, as they united in support of the political Islamic project.

- With the conclusion of the municipal elections, it became clear that the Islamic Salvation Front had crushed the most powerful secular political parties in Algeria, namely the ruling party, the National Liberation Front (FLN), thereby taking control of most of Algeria's municipalities. The Salvation Front leveraged this to prepare for victory in the legislative (parliamentary) elections held in 1990. The first round resulted in the Front winning a sweeping majority that would have enabled it, during the second round of the supplementary elections, to secure the overwhelming majority qualifying it to form the government and nominate for the presidency.

- Alarm bells rang in the East and West of the earth. The major Crusader states announced their readiness to intervene to block the Islamists from reaching power. Indeed, François Mitterrand, the French President at the time, stated that France was prepared for military intervention to prevent the Islamists from coming to power. The only solution before them was to instigate a military coup supported by the West, especially France.

- The coup occurred. The Front's leaders were arrested, demonstrations were violently suppressed, and the military regime that seized power and crushed democracy with the support of the hypocritical West opened desert prisons for tens of thousands of Islamist detainees. This was the cause of the beginning of the contemporary Jihādī uprising in Algeria, which is considered one of the most important Jihādī experiences worthy of study, and the last of the Jihādīs' confrontations with regimes, and the last of them in the twentieth century. From the beginning of that experience in 1989 until 1996, I had direct contact and a relationship with some of its developments, the most important of which I will refer to at the end of this section, Allāh willing. It was a bitter personal experience, yet rich in benefit. I recorded this, as I mentioned, in a manuscript that was ready but lost during our hasty withdrawal from Kabul during the American attack on Afghanistan after the September events. I have rewritten a summary of it and will publish it soon, Allāh willing. Here, however, I present the most important aspects of those experiences that I lived through closely, through brief main points.

The Experience of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and Other Groups in Algeria (1991-2000)

- Several hundred young Algerians, perhaps numbering around two thousand, had gone for Jihād in Afghanistan. They quickly proved, as is known about them, to be among the most formidable and courageous mujāhidīn. With the beginning of the 1990s, mujāhidīn from each country began to gather themselves and become independent in their entities regarding services, guesthouses, and training camps, despite the fighting fronts remaining shared among everyone under the general Arab coordination. Thus, the Algerians

among the Arab Afghans sought to organize themselves.

- "Qari Saʿid," as he was called, emerged as one of the most prominent leaders of the Algerian brethren and began organizing what later became known as the "Algerian Afghans." During that period and afterwards, I had a friendship with the man, and we were neighbors in Peshawar, which enabled me to learn about that experience. He spoke to me on several occasions—may Allāh have mercy on him—about his ambitions to form a Jihādī organization to operate in Algeria after the completion of the Afghan Jihād. The project was not rushed; rather, its objectives were within the framework of organizational training and preparation.

The events of the elections, what happened to the Salvation Front, and the military coup in 1990 spurred the Algerian brethren to return to their country to confront the tyrannical military junta.

- Qari Saʿid went to Algeria for reconnaissance, returning with the decision to transfer his men there in stages. He then returned to Algeria after appointing some brethren in Peshawar to continue intensive training and organize the process of transferring personnel to Algeria.

- The natural reaction of more than 3.5 million voters who chose the Islamic project in the elections and won, only to have their victory snatched away and tens of thousands of them herded into prisons, was that most of them would welcome calls for Jihād against the military authorities who had blocked their path to reaping the results of their victory, with the support and guidance of the West, especially France.

- The arena of the Islamic awakening in Algeria at that time was teeming with all the components of the Arab Islamic awakening, knowledge of which is important for understanding this complex experience. The most important of these blocs, according to their size and influence, were as follows:

First: The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS):

It consisted of a mixture of awakening schools, their leaders, Islamist organizations, independent preachers, in addition to broad bases of common Muslims who believed in the generalities of the political Islamic project without a specific methodology, other than the general slogan. Its most important main components were:

1. **The Students' Group (Jamaʿat al-Talaba):** Headed by Sheikh Muhammad Saʿid—may Allāh have mercy on him. Its foundation goes back to a group of Islamist students at the University of Algiers who were disciples of the famous Islamic thinker Malek Bennabi. Its general ideology was a mixture of Muslim Brotherhood ideas with the heritage of the Islamic awakening in Algeria from the legacy of the Association of Muslim Ulama, in addition to the ideas of Malek Bennabi—may Allāh have mercy on him.
2. **The Movement of the Islamic State (Harakat al-Dawla al-Islamiyya):** These were the remnants of the movement of the martyr Sheikh Mustafa Bouyali—may Allāh have mercy on him. They were led and represented in the Salvation Front by Sheikh Saʿid Makhloufi—may Allāh have mercy on him. It was a Jihādī group with Salafī beliefs.
3. **A Broad Segment of Followers of the Salafī Dawah:** They were led and represented in the Front by its second-in-command and famous orator Sheikh Ali Belhadj—may Allāh protect him.

4. **A number of independent figures of the Islamic Dawah.**
5. **A broad base of common Muslims sympathetic to the Islamic project.**

- **Second: The Muslim Brotherhood - International Organization Branch in Algeria:**

Headed by Mahfouz Nahnah, who named his party the "Movement of Society for Peace" (Hamas). Nahnah refused to come under the umbrella of the Salvation Front and remained opposed to it throughout the rest of his life, despite its ordeal. He launched a fierce attack on the mujāhidīn.

Third: The Local Muslim Brotherhood - The Islamic Renaissance Party (Hizb al-Nahda al-Islamiyya):

Headed by Abdallah Djaballah. Their ideology was a mixture of Muslim Brotherhood thought and the thought of the local Algerian Islamic awakening.

Fourth: The Salafīs:

A large segment of whom were based on the principles of "Jami-Madkhali thought," which derives its deviations from official Saudi scholars. Many of them supported the Algerian authorities.

Fifth: The Hardline Salafī Youth:

Some of them—as I was informed—formed a movement called Salafiyyat al-ʿAsima (Algiers Salafism). They called themselves the "Group for Commanding Good and Forbidding Evil." From the beginning, ideas ranging from bigotry, takfīr, and ignorance of religion and worldly affairs spread among them.

Sixth: A Wing of the Movement of the Islamic State:

Those who were with Sheikh Mustafa Bouyali and did not agree to join the Salvation Front due to its democratic methodology. They held Salafī Jihādī thought.

Seventh: The "Algerian Arab Afghans":

As they were later called, these were the Jihādīs moving between Algeria and the Afghan arena.

These were the most important components of the Islamic scene in Algeria at that time, in addition to marginal movements with little influence on their surroundings, such as the Tablighi Jamaat and various Sufi movements.

- Shortly after the military coup, dozens of young men took refuge in the mountains, began searching for weapons, and prepared to confront the military government. Then, very quickly, they began armed clashes with the government.

- The large sit-in in Algiers, called for by the Salvation Front, led to the surprise arrest of the Front's two main leaders and esteemed sheikhs, Abbasi Madani and Ali Belhadj, without any resistance, while they were leading a sit-in that had gathered hundreds of thousands of demonstrators! I later heard, while investigating this matter, that some members of the Salvation Front's Shura Council had betrayed them and did not carry out orders for confrontation—and Allāh knows best. I used to keep some details and names related to that period in my currently lost files, but I do not have them now. The Salvation Front was left without a head, and its basic components returned to operating in a decentralized manner. Sheikhs Abd al-Qadir Shabbouti, Abd al-Razzaq Rajjam, Muhammad Saʿid Makhloufi, and Muhammad Saʿid—may Allāh have

mercy on them all—emerged as heads of armed resistance blocs against the government in the capital and the surrounding mountains. Armed political chaos engulfed the country, and the omens of a devastating civil war appeared, which soon erupted fiercely. The mujāhidīn assassinated the new president, Boudiaf, who had been brought in by the coup plotters, causing armed clashes to reach their peak.

- Qari Saʿid, as mentioned, went down to Algeria for a month. He himself told me after his return about strenuous efforts made to unite the Arab Afghans with remnants of Mustafa Bouyali's group branch and some Salafī Jihādī cells there into a single Jihādī group. Then Qari Saʿid returned and telephoned his deputy in Peshawar to inform him of the formation of that group, which they named the Armed Islamic Group (GIA). This was in late 1990 or early 1991.

- A large part of the Salvation Front's Shura Council defected and formed a leadership that negotiated and cooperated with the military government. Others, led by Muhammad Saʿid, Abd al-Qadir Shabbouti, Abd al-Razzaq Rajjam, and Saʿid Makhloufi, refused conciliation and began confrontation in the name of the Salvation Front. Their meeting soon resulted in the formation of what became known as the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), headed by Madani Merzag, one of the Front's cadres who had taken to the mountains. The founding statement of the Islamic Salvation Army included most components of Salafī Jihādī thought and focused on the principle of rejecting a return to democracy.

- The military government quickly suppressed civil disobedience movements and banned political parties, foremost among them the Salvation Front, the Renaissance Movement, Nahnah's Muslim Brotherhood movement, the

Movement for Culture and Democracy (an Amazigh party headed by Ait Ahmed), and the National Liberation Front party, represented by the last civilian prime minister, Abdelhamid Mehri, as well as other small secular, socialist, and communist parties. They continued in opposition, then were suppressed, and many of their leaders left Algeria. The number of Islamist detainees reached over 50,000, filling the desert prisons. This led to an increase in the number of armed resisters in the mountains, said to have reached tens of thousands, and their operations numbered in the dozens daily.

- News of the Jihād in Algeria dominated headlines and media outlets during that period. The name of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) emerged as the most important and prominent group operating militarily against the military government. The name of its first amīr, Abd al-Haqq al-ʿAyyayda, became prominent. He was soon arrested by Moroccan authorities while attempting to purchase weapons and handed over to Algeria. He was succeeded by another brother (whose name I do not recall accurately now, perhaps Jaʿfar al-Afghani), who was then killed—may Allāh have mercy on him. He was then succeeded in early 1993 by its amīr Abu Abd Allāh Ahmad, under whose command great achievements were made.

- The intensity of military operations escalated. Qari Saʿid was arrested in one of the major attacks on the naval forces command in Algiers. He then escaped with more than 700 prisoners from Algiers Central Prison after several months. He then exerted his utmost effort to unify the fighting factions from all sides. Later, he was killed under mysterious circumstances in late 1994—may Allāh have mercy on him. During this period, state violence was immense, reaching the point of assassinating hundreds of political prisoners

in Serkadji prison, one of Algiers' prisons, in a single incident.

- By early 1993, all voices supporting Jihād in Algeria were calling on the mujāhidīn to unite their ranks. Indeed, significant efforts by many mujāhid leaders in the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), mujāhid leaders of the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), and many local Jihādī cells led to the achievement of that unity for which the second amīr of the GIA had worked, though he did not live to see it as he was killed shortly before—may Allāh have mercy on him. Abu Abd Allāh Ahmad assumed leadership of the group after him, and this unity was achieved during his tenure. A highly influential video was released, delighting Jihād circles, showing the scene of the sheikhs of the Front from the leadership of the Islamic Salvation Army (Muhammad Saʿid, Abd al-Razzaq Rajjam, Abd al-Qadir Shabbouti, and Saʿid Makhloufi) pledging allegiance to a young man, the age of some of their sons, as the amīr of the unified Jihād under the name of the Armed Islamic Group: Abu Abd Allāh Ahmad. This unity led to a flourishing of hopes for imminent comprehensive victory.

- The amīr of the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), Madani Merzag, rejected and opposed the unity, criticized those who joined it, and refused to recognize anything but the decisions of the two imprisoned sheikhs, Abbasi Madani and Ali Belhadj, when they were released from prison. He insisted on remaining outside the unity. However, dozens of secondary factions and groups from eastern and western Algeria and the central provinces joined the unity, and the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) came to represent more than 95% of the armed mujāhidīn, whose numbers reached tens of thousands by 1994.

- Abu Abd Allāh Ahmad was also killed under mysterious circumstances. A statement was issued by some members of the GIA Shura Council announcing

that Abu Abd al-Rahman Amin had assumed leadership of the group, followed by successive pledges of allegiance to him from faction leaders. Supporters of Jihād in Algeria abroad had no choice but to support them and pray for them. This was in late 1994 or early 1995.

- With Abu Abd al-Rahman Amin assuming leadership of the group, signs of a change in the direction of policies, statements, and operations within the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) began to appear, including:

- An increase in statements issued by the group, and an escalation of confrontation with civilian and social segments remotely connected to the state structure or authority, threatening them with death. This included media outlets, from the minister down to newspaper vendors in the street, as well as the education sector, extending to professors, schools, and students. Similarly, the Ministry of Oil, down to the workers who fill cars with petroleum. And so on.

- The audacity to issue fatwas declaring permissible the killing of women and children from the families of those working in state agencies.

- Escalation of confrontation with civilian militias associated with the government, making them a primary target.

- A rise in the tone of takfīr in public discourse, and other such misguided tendencies.

- During 1995, exiled leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front and leaders of Islamic, secular, and even communist political parties convened for a

conference under the auspices of the Vatican in Rome to form a political alliance that would offer a political solution to the Algerian crisis. However, the intransigence of the military government thwarted this strange and suspicious initiative, given its composition and venue.

- In late 1995, Abu Abd al-Rahman Amin and his deviant, criminal leadership dared to assassinate Sheikh Muhammad Saʿid, the mujāhid Abd al-Wahhab al-ʿAmmara, and other mujāhidīn belonging to the Students' Group who had joined the GIA under the unity agreement. They used to call them the "Algerianization Group" (Jamaʿat al-Jazʾara), a name Mahfouz Nahnah had coined to criticize their methodology. They killed them under the pretext that they were preparing to overthrow his leadership and, as they claimed, to preserve the Salafī identity of the group. From there, the reality of the deviations from the group's path began to be exposed.

- This leadership then followed that crime by issuing a book titled "Guidance of the Lord of the Worlds" (Hidayat Rabb al-ʿAlamin), signed by Abu Abd al-Rahman Amin, purporting it to be the methodology of the Armed Islamic Group. The book contained such varieties of ignorance, shades of extremism, takfīr, and deviation that it definitively established the new, deviant identity of the group under this amīr, and the dimensions of the catastrophe that had befallen the leadership of the GIA became clear. Abd al-Rahman Amin then followed this by directing his fighters to commit mass massacres of civilians in the villages neighboring them, under the pretext that they had joined government militias, thus declaring them apostates and deeming their killing and the enslavement of their women permissible, considering them renegades.

- The Algerian intelligence services exploited this atmosphere, which it later became clear they had sought and created. They infiltrated agents into the GIA leadership, of whom Amin may have been one. The government then followed this, as revealed by some who fled from the army and special forces—who were either forced to do so or witnessed it by chance, lest the story of that tragedy be lost—by organizing a series of horrific massacres of civilians, sparing neither old person, woman, child, nor even animal in those brutal massacres that took place during 1996-1997. Algeria witnessed horrors and seas of blood, reaching the point of killing worshippers in Ramadan as they left mosque doors, under the pretext that they had participated in elections and thereby apostatized! The largest massacres took place in areas known for the Salvation Front's success in the previous elections. This was tantamount to the government settling scores with those who had chosen the Islamic project, as these witnesses revealed with confirming documents through various media outlets years later. Al Jazeera channel broadcast some extremely important interviews in this regard, and some of those military personnel published their testimonies in books printed in France, and the matter is now clear.

- With the truth and the criminal, deviant orientation of the new leadership of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) becoming exposed, supporters both at home and abroad abandoned it. Prominent Jihādī figures and groups that had supported the GIA during its course issued numerous statements of denunciation from various Jihādī groups and personalities; I was among the first to take that stance, as I detailed in my testimony in a separate book. Jihādī battalions and factions within Algeria also began to defect from it, only for it to become more and more mired in horrific and shameful bloodbaths. Then, fighting erupted between the GIA and some of these breakaway

factions.

- The mujāhidīn from the "Jabal al-Arbaʿa' group," as they were called, who belonged to Sheikh Muhammad Saʿid's group—may Allāh have mercy on him—killed Abu Abd al-Rahman Amin, ridding the world of his evils. He was succeeded in leading the Armed Islamic Group by a butcher even more criminal than him, a man called Antar Zouabri, who continued the series of crimes, but after the group had weakened and its capabilities diminished. It persisted in its methodology after being isolated in limited areas until this latter individual was killed later in 2003 in Algeria.

- With the fragmentation and division of the mujāhidīn, and after people abandoned them and lost interest in the Jihādī, and even the Islamic, project, the schemes of Algerian and foreign intelligence reached their desired outcome from the massacre scenario they had planned. They launched a surrender program, claiming amnesty for armed men who laid down their weapons. The Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), led by Madani Merzag, was the first to respond to what became known as the "National Concord" appeal. A number of Muslim scholars abroad, such as Ibn Baz, Ibn Uthaymin, and Al-Albani, volunteered to support the state's call for surrender. Al-Albani issued his last fatwa before his death in 2000, declaring that the events in Algeria were the greatest proof of his assertion that "revolting against rulers in this era is, in reality, revolting against Islām itself!" Confusion reigned throughout the entire Islamic awakening scene because of the Algerian Jihādī experience, making it a testament for anyone wishing to prove their opinion on the failure of the Jihād option, and a lesson for those who would take heed. This came after Algerian intelligence, with the help of Arab and foreign intelligence services and the active participation of Arab media, succeeded in demolishing

the barrier between the concepts of Jihād and the ideas of takfīr, criminality, massacres, and bloodbaths.

- During 1998 and thereafter, events in Algeria continued to unfold. I had left London for Afghanistan, where it was impossible to keep up with news and events as one should, given the almost complete isolation from media, in addition to my disengagement from that issue's file and its labyrinths since early 1996 due to the profound disorientation it had caused me.

However, from the information that reached me from some esteemed Algerian mujāhidīn who sought refuge in Afghanistan during the Taliban era, and through my follow-up as much as possible of media outlets, some individuals interested in this issue, and some statements that were issued afterwards and reached us, it appeared that the overwhelming majority of armed men and mujāhidīn had come down from the mountains due to what was called the National Concord project. Small groups remained here and there in Algeria wanting to continue the confrontation with the regime, which emerged boasting of a resounding victory over the Islamists and Jihādīs.

Then, a group calling itself the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), led by its amīr Hassan Hattab, came to public attention. It appeared from its statements that it had learned some lessons from that harsh experience, as it focused in its communiqués on refuting ideas of takfīr and extremism, concentrating confrontation on the military and security apparatuses of the authorities, and highlighting the general objectives of establishing a legitimate state. However, most Jihādī circles seemed wary of this, as the shock of what had happened was enormous. The media has reported, and continues to report, some news of this

group's operations, most notably some kidnappings of foreigners and their ransoming for large sums.

Furthermore, the Algerian mujāhidīn who came to Afghanistan, in turn, tried to gather themselves and organize their affairs to resume work on their cause. They formed a semi-cohesive group that was struggling against difficult circumstances to revive such a cause. Some signs of success and guidance appeared among some of the mature individuals. However, the September events overtook them, as they overtook everyone, with known consequences. They took their positions in the battle of self-defense and defense of the Emirate. They received—may Allāh accept from them—a plentiful share of affliction, and many of them registered their names in the list of martyrs and prisoners, victims of the September chasm at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

(I have recorded my testimony about the Jihād experience in Algeria in a separate book due to the importance of that experience, titled "Summary of My Testimony on Jihād in Algeria 1989-1996." I advise the brethren to refer to it for the important lessons from that bitter experience.)

9. Jihādī Experiences in Yemen (1990-1998)

a. The experience of Sheikh Osama bin Laden—may Allāh protect him (1990-2001).
b. The Jihādī experience of the martyr Abu al-Hasan al-Mihdhar - Army of Aden-Abyan (since 1998).

I have long believed that Yemen is one of the Arab world's regions most prepared for a Jihādī movement possessing most elements of causal success, especially after unification. I wrote a special research paper on this of about 40 pages, titled "The Responsibility of the People of Yemen for the Sanctities and Wealth of Muslims," in which I proved this and incited towards it.

Its vast area of approximately 400,000 square kilometers, its long coastlines exceeding 2,500 kilometers, its control over the Bab al-Mandab Strait, and its openness to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states on one side, and to the Horn of Africa and the ammunition and weapons it provides in East Africa on the other. Its population density, which constitutes about 70% of the Arabian Peninsula's population, i.e., approximately 25 million out of about 40 million, and its diverse and rugged geographical nature, with widespread mountains, making it one of the most suitable regions for Jihādī guerrilla warfare. Also, the conservative, religious nature of its population and its tribal structure, sound and unspoiled by the destruction of modern civilization and the negatives of an urban, industrial character. The prevalence of weapons and their connection to social life traditions, where official statistics indicate the presence of more than 70 million firearms in the hands of tribesmen and the population, excluding what the government possesses, i.e., an average of more than 3 firearms per citizen, including women, the elderly, and infants! Furthermore, the Islamic awakening there is old and deep-rooted, dating back to the early 1950s, and it is diverse, encompassing most known schools of the awakening, from the Muslim Brotherhood to Salafism, Sururism, Tabligh and Dawah, to Sufism, and so on. This is in addition to the nature of the population, distinguished by their resolve and combat capabilities, as Yemen resisted various forms of colonialism for a long time, and colonial powers were unable to establish themselves there, as happened to the Portuguese, then the British, then the Ottomans, then the Egyptian army during Nasser's era.

In our long-standing Jihādī experience in Afghanistan (1984-1992), Yemeni mujāhid youth constituted the second-highest statistic among Arab youth who came for the Afghan Jihād, and likewise in their second phase (1996-2001). They were an example of bravery, courage, chivalric qualities, and Arab authenticity. It has amazed me, and still amazes me, that a widespread Jihādī movement has not arisen there.

Economically, more than 70% of the population lives below the poverty line and under the yoke of oppression, while most of the remaining inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula nearby revel in the blessings Allāh has bestowed upon that peninsula from its wealth, which is the property of Muslims in general and the people of the Peninsula in particular, they being its vast majority.

So, as you can see, the Sharīʿah, economic, demographic, political, and geographical factors, and everything that usually contributes to the eruption of successful revolutions, are available there. Herein lies the wonder that such a Jihādī movement does not arise, despite a dilapidated government led by an ignorant tyrant for many long years, who even tries to install his son after him as king over the formerly socialist, now American-democratic republic! I am not here to research that, as I have researched it in a separate study, as mentioned before. The fundamental reason for this is that most leaders of the Islamic awakening are among those who abstain from Jihād, having vested interests, and that most Dawah sheikhs are opportunists and scholars of the sultans who have become accustomed to parliamentary seats and relaxation in the tyrant's embrace. This is in addition to the dominance of the authority of clan and tribal leaders, many of whom have, for decades and perhaps centuries, habitually sold their religion for their worldly life and the worldly life of others. This has been proven most clearly by the leaders of the Islamic awakening and tribal chiefs—who form the main weight gathered in what was called the Islah Party—foiling the Islamic street uprising in what was known as the constitution events of 1993, and combating all subsequent Jihādī attempts.

This has rendered the emerging young Jihādī leadership incapable of producing field commanders able to draw the bases of the Islamic awakening and the large, million-strong segment in Yemen behind them.

The problem of Yemen, like the problem of the Arab and Islamic world, in short, is two things: the cowardice and incompetence of the scholars, and the ignorance and loss of the common people, and the overwhelming love of this world and hatred of death that has gripped everyone, until Allāh permits relief. Let us return to the subject:

After the return of the Yemeni mujāhid youth from Afghanistan in the early 1990s, and over the last decade of the twentieth century, numerous Jihādī attempts were made in Yemen, all of which failed for the reasons I have summarized. The most prominent and serious of these attempts were Sheikh Osama bin Laden's effort since 1990 to establish a Jihādī foundation in Yemen, and the movement known as the Army of Aden-Abyan, led by the martyr Abu al-Hasan al-Mihdhar—may Allāh have mercy on him—around mid-1998.

a. A Brief Overview of Sheikh Osama bin Laden's Jihādī Attempts in Yemen

- Sheikh Osama bin Laden—may Allāh protect him—hails from a South Yemeni origin in Hadhramaut. He is one of the sons of Muhammad bin Laden, who migrated from Yemen to Saudi Arabia at the beginning of King Abdulaziz's reign. He settled there, forming a family close to the Al Saud, and enjoyed extensive financial and political influence there from that time until today.

- During the Afghan Jihād against the Russians, Sheikh Osama was keen on forming an organized group around him, focusing on Jihādī elements from the Arabian Peninsula, especially from Saudi Arabia and Yemen. In the 1990s, the conditions for a Jihādī movement against the communist rule in South Yemen, before unification, were ripe. Many North Yemeni Islamists and tribes supported this, and it also received significant support from wealthy Hadhrami merchants with substantial economic capabilities in Saudi Arabia, and from the Islamic awakening in general, which harbored animosity

towards communism in general, and particularly in neighboring Yemen. This coincided with the arrival of a number of Yemeni mujāhidīn of southern origin during the Arab Jihād in Afghanistan.

- Sheikh Osama's specific and primary Jihādī project was to create a Jihādī movement in South Yemen. He initiated this in 1989-1990 and continued his attempt until the unification. Although a number of Jihādīs close to Sheikh Osama at the time—and I was among them—urged him to commence that Jihād directly, he hesitated, waiting to convince the leaders of the awakening in Yemen, especially Muslim Brotherhood figures like the then-prominent Sheikh Abd al-Majid al-Zindani, to join. Those individuals were not going to do so, and a golden opportunity was lost, in my belief.

- Since unification, Sheikh Osama's project had shifted to an attempt at the level of a unified Yemen. The problem of the conflict over the constitution of unified Yemen, and the contradiction between Islamists and secularists, presented an opportunity to declare Jihād against Ali Abdullah Saleh and the newly established government of unified Yemen. Sheikh Osama moved to exploit this opportunity. A number of Yemeni sheikhs approached him, led by the well-known Sheikh Omar Saif, whose name was put on a book—written by some of Sheikh Osama's associates—that proved the kufr (disbelief) of the constitution. They also proved in it the kufr of the government based on it and the legitimacy of Jihād against it.

- Sheikh Osama approached the sheikhs of Yemen and its senior preachers from the Salafī movement, headed by Sheikh Muqbil bin Hadi al-Wadi'i, and the Muslim Brotherhood and their leaders. He spent vast sums of money to win them over, and some tribes, to the project. However, all of them let him

down. Ali Abdullah Saleh managed to sway them, assigning them positions and granting them endowments, influence, and facilities.

As for Sheikh al-Zindani, he aborted the million-strong armed demonstration that headed to the gate of the Republican Palace, which he led along with other Muslim Brotherhood leaders and others. He entered the palace with some others to negotiate with the president. He then emerged to the armed demonstrators, who were demanding the fall of the constitution and the government and the implementation of Sharīʿah, to tell them, "Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day, let him return to his home." The crowd dispersed, only for the esteemed Sheikh Abd al-Majid al-Zindani to become, the very next day, one of the vice presidents and one of the five rulers of Yemen who formed the Presidential Council headed by Ali Abdullah Saleh! This council included atheist socialists, according to the Sheikh's old doctrine! His senior colleagues in Islah were distributed between ministerial posts and parliamentary seats, under the tyrannical constitution legislated without Allāh's permission, which stated at its head that the state's religion is Islām and Sharīʿah is the source of the constitution and laws.

As for Sheikh Muqbil bin Hadi al-Wadi'i, his position was even more detrimental and fierce. He wrote a book in which he described Sheikh Osama as the head of sedition (fitna) in Yemen. His audio tapes were extremely hostile in their attacks on him, and his efforts to dissuade people from Sheikh Osama's project were sold on sidewalks after Friday sermons, where he would say that Bin Laden had sent him money under the pretext of Jihād, seeking to create sedition, so he used it to marry off young men and buy books for mosques!

Young mujāhidīn from Yemen also related that al-Wadi'i, the Sheikh of Salafism, spared none of the symbols of the awakening from his harm at that time. He attacked the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Sururis, the Sufis, and the

Jihādīs, while praising Ali Abdullah Saleh, always referring to him as "Brother President," and emphasizing obedience to him as a Muslim ruler! I once heard Sheikh Osama say in front of some of his guests that if he were to forgive everyone who had harmed him in his life, he would not forgive al-Wadi'i. Anyone who knows the magnanimity of Sheikh Bin Laden, even towards those who harmed him, can understand the extent of his pain from that man, who has now met his Lord.

As for most of the young Jihādī leaders whom Sheikh Osama recruited and trained in Afghanistan, Ali Abdullah Saleh won them over by giving them ranks in the Yemeni army and admitting those who wished into the military and civil service. So they rode cars and assumed positions. The most prominent among them, such as al-Fadhli and al-Nahdi, even went on to work in the intelligence services and the Republican Guard as some of Ali Abdullah Saleh's closest associates!

These three examples—the Muslim Brotherhood, Salafī, and Jihādī figures in Yemen—epitomize the fundamental problem in Yemen: their leaders lacked a Jihādī methodological upbringing during their preparatory periods, which focused on military training but lacked any ideology or methodology to shield them from such enticements.

- Unity was established. The government (and its five-member Presidential Council) and parliament were formed from supporters of Ali Abdullah Saleh and his party (the People's Congress), and from Islamists, primarily leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood and some tribal chiefs who formed the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah), headed by Hussein al-Ahmar and al-Zindani, and from the Socialist Party (Southerners).

Ali Abdullah Saleh attempted, and succeeded, in pitting the two sides against each other and strengthening his own influence, then he strengthened himself with the Islamists against the Southern socialists. During that period, some Jihādīs

assassinated some socialist leaders who had planned a coup against unity. However, Ali Abdullah Saleh and the Islamists marched on Aden in what became known as the War of Unity, crushed their attempts, and imposed unity by force.

Sheikh Osama had ordered his supporters and followers in Yemen, the Jihādīs who had returned from Afghanistan, to enter the battle alongside the North Yemeni army, as all Islamists in the North had done, on the understanding that this would lead to gaining a stage by overthrowing communism. Indeed, the mujāhidīn from Jihādī and Islamist ranks played a decisive role, and the resistance of the Southerners quickly collapsed, in a haste that did not allow for international intervention, nor could Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council states save the communists in Yemen! This was despite the fatwas of Ibn Baz and the Council of Senior Scholars calling for an end to the sedition and reconciliation between the Northern Muslims, led by Saleh, and the "Muslim" communists in the South!

In my belief, and the opinion of many Yemeni Jihādīs I met, the Islamists could have returned to the North to impose Sharīʿah rule or isolate Saleh and establish an Islamic state. However, what happened was their return to parliament and ministerial seats in Ali Abdullah Saleh's government, with its secular constitution and apostate rule. The Jihādīs remained isolated, as most of them followed the leaders of the "Awakening!!" from Salafī, Muslim Brotherhood, and Sururi backgrounds! Meanwhile, many of them preferred military ranks, government positions, and personal benefits, as "Sergeant Ali Saleh" succeeded in luring them with worldly gains.

- Sheikh Osama had moved to Sudan. Al-Qāʿidah became engrossed in its investment and economic activities in what they believed to be an Islamic state that deserved support, led by President Bashir and "Imam" Hassan al-Turabi, according to the belief of some members of al-Qāʿidah's Sharīʿah committee at the time! Some of its members also participated in the Jihād in

Somalia alongside Islamist factions and actively contributed to convincing the Americans to withdraw from its desert quicksands.

- Sheikh Osama's followers and some Jihādīs also carried out limited operations against initial American attempts to establish a military base in Aden. A number of Katyusha rockets they fired at the preliminary construction works for the base convinced the Americans to abandon the project.

No significant Jihādī attempt by Sheikh Osama's followers has taken place in Yemen since 1994, as he later shifted to Jihād against America.

- When the Sheikh returned to Afghanistan in mid-1996, young mujāhidīn from Yemen began to join the second wave of Arab Afghans in Afghanistan, including supporters of Sheikh Osama.

- Sheikh Osama stated to the Al-Quds Al-Arabi newspaper in 1997 that his next station would be the mountains of Yemen, and his project in Yemen was revived, but through his new strategy: fighting the head of the serpent, America, and refraining from entering into confrontations with its tails, including the small, dwarf tail of Abdullah Saleh in the important region of Yemen.

- In 1999, as I recall, an al-Qāʿidah cell carried out a martyrdom attack on the American destroyer USS Cole, which was refueling in Yemeni ports. This escalated the confrontation with Yemeni intelligence, which entered the "war on terror" alongside America. Many Jihādīs were arrested, including some of

Bin Laden's supporters, and the war intensified.

It is said that Ali Abdullah Saleh's government was forced to release some of Bin Laden's followers after a threatening letter from him to Saleh, reminding him that al-Qāʿidah's battle was not with the Yemeni government, but that it could make it so.

- In late 2001, shortly before September, Bin Laden gathered his senior supporters in Kandahar to tell them to pack their bags, as the time had come to depart for Yemen. While rumors, astonishment, and hope circulated in the Arab Afghan arena about this move, the September 2001 explosions occurred, to be followed by:
  A strike that removes the head from its resting place, and makes the intimate friend forget his companion.

This was followed by the pursuit of Jihādīs in Yemen, under the pretext that the entire Ummah of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and all of America's enemies among creatures, belonged to al-Qāʿidah, according to American media and counter-terrorism programs.

The Jihādīs in Yemen received a large share of this persecution. Many brethren from al-Qāʿidah and others fell as martyrs or were taken prisoner in the "war on terror" battles in Yemen, led by America and executed by its apostate slaves from the Yemeni army and intelligence elements. An American drone, with the approval and cooperation of Yemeni intelligence and its collaborator spies, managed to destroy a car with an air-to-ground missile, killing the martyred brother Abu Ali al-Harithi and five of his brethren in a Yemeni village—may Allāh have mercy on him. Reports of pursuits continued, sometimes escalating to fierce battles, bringing news of a brother martyred here and another arrested there, under the claim that they were from al-Qāʿidah.

b. The Experience of the Army of Aden-Abyan led by Abu al-Hasan al-Mihdhar—may Allāh have mercy on him—since (1998)

The martyr Abu al-Hasan al-Mihdhar Zayn al-Abidin—who was from the Ashraf (descendants of the Prophet) of Yemen—possessed a fervent Jihādī spirit and a high degree of magnanimity and integrity that prevented him from tolerating the conditions in Yemen during the last decade of the past century. I have heard some accounts from Yemeni brethren that he had met Sheikh Osama to convince him to ignite the spark of Jihād in Yemen, but they did not reach an agreement on the method and timing of that.

Then, in the mid-1990s, he visited some prominent scholars of the awakening in Saudi Arabia to incite them to support him in a Jihād project in Yemen, but no one responded to him.

Indeed, senior supervisors of creed instruction and heads of its departments in Saudi universities, who had filled book pages and scholarly lesson tapes with the characteristics of the pure creed and the methodology of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab's Dawah, went so far in their lectures and stances as to declare that the best means of Dawah in Yemen was the democratic option! They also supported the democratic path in Turkey, North Africa, and elsewhere. This is one of the calamities for those who lived in these times and witnessed wonders.
However, the resolve of that valiant mujāhid prevented him from remaining inactive. He had numerous engagements and confrontations with the Yemeni government and its security apparatus. A notable instance was his renowned and witnessed stance when the security services arrested the wives of the Arab Afghan mujāhidīn who had sought refuge in Yemen. The authorities refused to release these women unless their husbands, who were fugitives within Yemen, were deported. He played a role in gathering scholars, preachers, and tribal leaders, urging them to act

upon their religious zeal and tribal honor. He did not rest until he was the primary reason for their release and the alleviation of their distress.

He spent considerable sums of his own money on this and incurred large debts to support his movement, his call, and his activities.

In late 1997, he began to form an armed group and an independent organization called the Aden-Abyan Army, named in auspicious reference to the noble Ḥadīth narrated from the Messenger of Allāh, may Allāh bless him and grant him peace, in which he says: *"Twelve thousand will emerge from Aden-Abyan; they are the best between me and them."*

When a number of men, said to be around two hundred, had gathered with him, he took up arms and proceeded with his men to a rugged mountainous area. There, he established a camp for himself and his group to begin mobilizing for Jihād against the Yemeni government. News of this reached us in Afghanistan in the spring of 1998, and we anticipated that this would be the spark for the Jihād we had long awaited in Yemen—a Yemen that was once happy before being ruled by the likes of Abdullah Saleh and before the call to Islām was led by the contemporary leaders of its Awakening.

However, senior preachers and sheikhs of the so-called Awakening focused significant efforts on persuading him to abandon his armed struggle. They promised him positions and money from the government if he desisted, but he refused. Preachers from various schools of the Awakening played a significant role in letting him down, dissuading as many of his supporters as they could, and convincing them that the attempt was futile. The young men began to disperse from him.

The greatest act of betrayal, which significantly contributed to the desertion of many of them, came from some Jihādīs and some veteran Arab Afghans among the Yemeni brothers. They claimed it was a hasty and immature movement, lacking a program.

Instead of these Islamist and Jihādī advisors joining their efforts with his to guide his movement, their stance was negative, as I was told by several narrators. I believe his emergence was an opportunity for them and for the cause of Jihād in Yemen, but it was lost.

In the summer of 1998, the Yemeni government arrested a number of Jihādīs from among Yemeni youth, in addition to several Arab Jihādī brothers who had sought refuge there. In response, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Miḥḍār kidnapped several foreign tourists to pressure the government to release them. However, the government, contrary to its usual practice of negotiating with tribal figures who often kidnapped tourists to achieve their demands, seized this as an opportunity to eliminate the nascent movement. It besieged the area and escalated the situation until it led to clashes. It deployed, at the forefront of its units, those preachers and brothers it could muster to bring down whomever they could from the mountain and persuade them to surrender. Allāh is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.

When the assault on them began, only a few dozen men remained with him. Some of them were killed, and some of the hostages were killed. Some reports reached us in Afghanistan – and Allāh knows best their veracity – that those with him refused to execute the hostages when the government began its attack, so only one or two of them were killed. Abū al-Ḥasan al-Miḥḍār was captured. Britain and some Western countries exerted intense pressure on the Yemeni government to execute Abū al-Ḥasan al-Miḥḍār, whose execution was subsequently announced in the summer of 2000. May Allāh Almighty have mercy on him and his brothers and grant them spacious dwellings in His Paradise, and may He compensate Yemen for their loss with righteous men who will raise the banner of Jihād therein until those foretold by the Messenger of Allāh, may Allāh bless him and grant him peace, emerge from among them.

My Relationship with the Yemeni Brothers and My Observations on the Jihād Experience There

As I mentioned earlier, I became convinced of the viability of Jihād in Yemen as early as 1989. At that time, I was close to Sheikh Osama, who informed me then of some aspects of his Jihād project in Yemen. After the Desert Storm war, known as the war for the liberation of Kuwait, I made efforts and sought to persuade Sheikh Osama of the feasibility and necessity of moving to Yemen. The atmosphere was very conducive after the American presence in the Arabian Peninsula, followed by the events surrounding the constitution. However, he believed that this was not possible without the assistance of the other figures of the Awakening.

I have known many Yemeni brothers since the first Afghan Jihād. When I returned to Afghanistan for the second phase, I took an interest in the experiences that had occurred in Yemen and endeavored to write their history with one of the most prominent Jihādī youths from Yemen (the martyr Muhannad ʿAtash). But martyrdom reached him first, may Allāh have mercy on him.

During the spring of 1998, after Abū al-Ḥasan's emergence, one of his friends spoke to me about al-Miḥḍār's movement, the hopes pinned on it, and the necessity of assisting him with advice, support, and backing. He informed me that al-Miḥḍār was using some of my lectures from the Afghan Jihād era and my book, *The Jihād Experience in Syria*, to give educational lessons to his followers, and that such advice would have a positive impact on him. Indeed, I entrusted the man with a letter and a recorded tape containing a summary of my thoughts and advice on Jihād in Yemen. The man went and delivered the message, and he informed me by phone of its arrival to al-Miḥḍār. I waited for news that might open a Jihādī path for us, bringing us closer to the center of the conflict in the Middle East, along the sacred line extending from Yemen to the Hijaz and the Levant. I hoped to join him and support

him. However, the media soon brought us news of the disaster, the summary of which I recounted earlier.

Later, some of the brothers who had witnessed that tragedy with Abū al-Ḥasan arrived in Kabul, and I obtained from many of them a summary of what had transpired. Then I read in some Saudi newspapers about that experience, that they had confiscated from Abū al-Ḥasan's camp some books and tapes carrying our "subversive" ideology – subversive to those governments and those behind them. Among these were tapes by Sheikh Khālid Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, which was the pseudonym I adopted for publishing my lecture tapes on the Afghanistan experience. They linked that name to the kunya of the martyr Abū al-Ḥasan al-Miḥḍār Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, an unintended coincidence. They also mentioned finding copies of my book, *The Syrian Experience*, there. I prayed for mercy upon him and was pleased that this was the case. I asked the Almighty, may He be glorified and exalted, to include me in the reward with them and that we meet them at His noble Basin among the band of strangers, those fleeing with their religion. Indeed, He is All-Hearing, Near, Most Generous.

During our experience in the second phase of the Arab Afghans in Afghanistan in the time of the Taliban, some mujāhidīn from Yemen frequented the camp I established near Kabul for preparation and dissemination of the ideology of global resistance, the methodology of the Jihādī current, and its heritage. I was keen to give them special attention due to the status this corner of the Islāmic world held for me and its importance in my hopes for Jihād and resistance. I wrote a research paper titled "The People of Yemen and Their Responsibility for the Sanctuaries and Wealth of Muslims" and recorded several tapes on the subject of Jihād in Yemen. I learned that they reached the arena there and were circulated among Jihādīs and Islamists. One day, the news of the execution of the martyr Abū al-Ḥasan al-Miḥḍār reached us, and I was deeply affected. In recognition of the Jihād of that valiant, courageous mujāhid

– who had a rightful claim upon many Jihādīs in Yemen and elsewhere – there was nothing we could do but call for a memorial service in our camp on the occasion of his execution. His virtues were mentioned, and everyone prayed for mercy upon him. May Allāh have mercy on a man with whom we developed a bond of love from afar without ever meeting him, and may He grant him spacious dwellings in His Paradise. We ask Allāh to send to Yemen those who will establish therein and work towards the glad tidings of the emergence of the righteous ones, as foretold by the truthful, confirmed Messenger, may Allāh bless him and grant him peace.

10. Attempts to Build Jihādī Groups in Morocco Since 1995 and the Experience of the Jihādī Islāmic Group in Morocco

As I mentioned earlier, the armed Jihādī experience in Morocco against Hassan II, undertaken by the Moroccan Youth Organization under the leadership of Sheikh Abd al-Karim Muti‘, was one of the very early attempts in the Arab world. Indeed, it preceded the nascent intellectual stirrings of the contemporary Jihādī current. As I have stated in some of my previous writings, Morocco is among the few countries in the Arab and Islāmic world, like Central Asia, Yemen, Algeria, and Turkey, where the conditions for a Jihādī revolution exist in terms of causes and prerequisites.

The Maghreb al-Aqsa (Morocco) is a vast country with rugged terrain, possessing several rural areas and difficult mountain ranges. Its coastline extends for more than 3,000 km, and it controls the Strait of Gibraltar. Its people languish under severe poverty, deprivation, and tyrannical rule. They also have a glorious history of Jihād, combat, and a shining record of valor and courage. It is a religious populace, regardless of the corruption that has infiltrated some of its major cities through government policies of openness and the promotion of prostitution under the guise of tourism. Islām still maintains its presence and sanctity. It has an Islāmic Awakening dating back to the early 1960s, also composed of most of the components and schools of the contemporary Islāmic Awakening, from Salafism to

the Muslim Brotherhood, to activist Sufism, to Jihādīs. A considerable number of Moroccan youth participated in the Jihād in Afghanistan and returned to their country without major problems, as the policy of the cunning, deceased Hassan II was to co-opt the Awakening rather than provoke it. His policy proved highly successful in hollowing out the Awakening from within and also pushing it into the arenas of Morocco's nascent pseudo-democracy, causing senior preachers there to oscillate between disciplinary imprisonment, house arrest, and parliamentary seats. Shortly after the outbreak of the contemporary Jihādī revolution in Algeria, following the abortion of the Islamic Salvation Front's successes, Morocco became the main transit point from which most Algerian Arab Afghans entered their country.

Initially, Morocco turned a blind eye to this as a reaction to the Algerian government's support for the separatist Polisario Front, which advocated for the independence of Western Sahara from Morocco. Consequently, a number of cells formed in eastern Morocco and the Rif region, providing significant assistance for transit, weapons transfer from Europe, and logistical services to the mujāhidīn in western Algeria. This was before the criminal leadership of the Armed Islāmic Group (GIA) took over that cause, as we have narrated.

Thus, due to the experience of the Moroccan Arab Afghan mujāhidīn on one hand, and the winds of influence from Algeria on the other, the beginnings of Jihādī nuclei formation started in Morocco. Strategic studies centers in Europe, particularly in France, that monitor Islāmic affairs in North Africa, had predicted that the Islāmic revolution in North Africa would first erupt in Morocco. I have read some reports issued in France expressing surprise that it began in Algeria before Morocco.

Some immature Jihādī attempts were made by certain individuals, targeting some Western tourists and carrying out rare operations against some members of the Jewish community in Morocco, which controls centers of political, economic, and

media influence there and pushes the country in a frenzied manner towards normalization with Israel.

Since the mid-1990s, serious attempts began to form Jihādī cells and organizational nuclei inside and outside Morocco. The winds of the Jihādī current reached Morocco strongly on the sidelines of the Jihād in Algeria. Moreover, the steps towards Jewish normalization and Crusader Westernization took a serious and overt form with the accession to power of King Mohammed VI, his father's crown prince, after his father's demise.

In the mid-1990s, a number of young Moroccans from the Jihādī current managed to form the nucleus of a Jihādī organization to operate in Morocco. It appears its initial seeds were sown among Moroccan immigrants in some European countries, including some Moroccan Arab Afghans. It then spread to several other countries where the Moroccan immigrant community in Europe forms a huge segment, perhaps nearing five million, with most residing primarily in France, Belgium, Holland, and Central European countries, while not insignificant communities exist in other European nations. The group issued a methodology and a number of writings, mostly in a clandestine manner, and disseminated them among Moroccan communities in Europe, distributing them on a limited scale within Morocco. I have reviewed some of these writings; in their entirety, they follow the same methodology of the Jihādī current prevalent during that period.

When the Islāmic Emirate was established in Afghanistan during the Taliban era, and many Jihādīs moved there from European havens, this group opened a camp and several guesthouses for themselves in Afghanistan. They began a comprehensive military and educational preparation program, as well as training cadres arriving from Europe or from Morocco itself. It was a promising movement. These Moroccan mujāhidīn, like others, participated in supporting the Islāmic Emirate. When September [2001] came, they joined the ranks of those who engaged

in the battle of self-defense and defense of the Islāmic Emirate, where they endured their share of tribulation. Some were martyred, others were captured, and the remainder dispersed with the few who survived that ordeal. I ask Allāh to protect and guide them, for there were remarkable individuals among them.

In late 2003, media outlets reported news of massive explosions targeting some Western interests in Casablanca, carried out by martyrdom operatives. News agencies, quoting Moroccan government sources, provided the sole narrative of the event, attributing it to what they termed "Salafi Jihādism." It was also reported that those responsible were individuals described as "takfiris" (those who excommunicate Muslims), according to the claims of those media outlets. I was unable to ascertain more about this.

However, it is important and noteworthy that on the sidelines of these events, about which I have not obtained reliable accounts, the Moroccan security services arrested hundreds of young men in what became known as the "Salafi Jihādī current." Moroccan courts issued numerous death sentences and long prison terms. Also arrested in this crackdown were a number of prominent Salafi and Jihādī preachers in Morocco who had no connection to these events. This appeared to be an early pre-emptive strike against any potential formation of a Jihādī phenomenon, for which all conditions were ripe in that country, afflicted by a tyrannical government, one of the most oppressive, despotic, and collaborationist with the enemies of Islām – Jews and Crusaders – among Arab and Islāmic regimes.

On a personal level, I have had fraternal and friendly relations with many Moroccan brothers since my time in France, then Spain, then Britain, due to the large presence of Moroccans in those countries and within Islāmic Awakening circles in the West. I knew many remarkable cadres among them, distinguished by their sincerity, purity, and fervent enthusiasm. The effects of their people's suffering under that deceased pharaoh, King Hassan II, then his decadent son, the current King Mohammed V (sic:

should be Mohammed VI), their family, and their regime, which oppressed the believers in Morocco, were evident in them and in their desire for action and Jihād.

In the second phase of the Arab Afghans in Afghanistan, I got to know many of them, especially the youth of the nascent group, the Jihādī Group in Morocco. They were a model of sincere youth, burning with enthusiasm and a desire for productivity and contribution. I had high hopes for their promising experience, had not Allāh's decree overtaken them in Afghanistan, as the chasm of September consumed many of their cadres. Those who refused [to surrender] dispersed across the land, joining the caravan of those fleeing with their religion. May Allāh accept from them and all their brothers.

I cannot forget to record, with all respect and appreciation, the magnificent contribution and outstanding performance of some Moroccan mujāhidīn in the heroic operation that resulted in the withdrawal of the Spanish army from the Iraq war – during the government of the right-wing party led by Aznar – which constituted the third side of the allied triangle, alongside America and Britain. Although I could not identify the group to which those exceptional individuals belonged, the entire Muslim ummah is indebted to that constellation of martyrdom operatives to whom belongs the honor of initiating the fracturing of the American-Crusader alliance. One who contemplates that operation to its heroic end discovers the extent of the creative energies within that noble Moroccan Muslim people, proving they are worthy successors to their great ancestors who carried the mission of Jihād in the western lands of the Islāmic ummah throughout glorious Islāmic history.

11. The Experience of the Lebanese Arab Afghans in the Nabatieh Mountains Led by the Martyr Abū ʿĀʾishah al-Lubnānī – May Allāh Have Mercy on Him – (1999)

The Lebanese mujāhidīn from the Arab Afghans were among the nationalities from which small numbers came to Afghanistan. In addition to their participation in the field, they were distinguished by their courtesy and good morals. They were among the nationalities whose members were able to return to their countries without significant problems. Some of them were subjected to arrest, interrogation, and imprisonment after a small group among them assassinated one of the leaders of a deviant religious movement in Lebanon, attributed to its founder (the Ahbash movement). The victim was a member of the Lebanese parliament. According to the accounts of the Lebanese brothers, that movement was providing significant services to Syrian intelligence in Lebanon and harming Muslim youth. It was also characterized by aggression, and it pursued Sunni and Jihādī youth in their mosques and harassed them. This group was then arrested, and the death penalty was carried out on them, after its members displayed rare heroism and steadfastness in their statements in court, before the press, and during the execution. The Sunni community mourned their pure bodies in a solemn procession that embodied a scene of unity among its diverse movements in Lebanon.

Then, some members of that group continued to propagate its Salafi Jihādī ideas in various Lebanese regions, especially in northern Lebanon near the city of Tripoli and the Nabatieh mountains. Their goal, according to the vision drawn by their amīr (leader), brother Abū ʿĀʾishah al-Lubnānī, was to establish a Jihādī movement for Sunni youth that would work to establish an Islāmic revolution aimed at implementing Sharīʿah in Lebanon, or at least to create a force for the Sunnis in Lebanon.

Brother Abū ʿĀʾishah al-Lubnānī, may Allāh have mercy on him, was one of the veteran Arab Afghans from the days of the Afghan Jihād. He had immigrated to the United States and came from there to Afghanistan. After the end of the Afghan Jihād, he returned to America and from there to Lebanon, carrying in his heart ideas and hopes for establishing a local Jihādī movement for the Sunnis in Lebanon.

Due to a friendship and cooperative relationship I had with him and some of his brothers during the Afghan Jihād, I maintained some intermittent contact with some of them in subsequent periods, which enabled me to learn about their objectives. I sent him a message with one of my friends who met him, conveying my conviction that his idea ran contrary to geography, politics, history, and the realities on the ground, and that it would be better for them to try to return and benefit from the atmosphere in Afghanistan during the Taliban era to continue establishing and preparing themselves gradually. I also conveyed my viewpoint that Lebanon's political, demographic, and regional conditions did not permit his ideas, which seemed unrealistic to me. I advised him to try to develop his Jihādī project into a broader regional concept that takes into account the stage reached in the global confrontation between Muslims and the New World Order. However, he – may Allāh have mercy on him – seemed insistent and convinced of his program, and he sent me a concise reply: "You tried in Syria, and our brothers tried in Egypt, Libya, and Algeria. Let us try in Lebanon."

After a short period, it seems that the increased activity of his supporters, who grew from individuals to dozens, boosted their self-confidence and prompted them to move with some degree of openness. Some locals in the area reported that they were aware of their presence in the mountains, and that some of them moved about almost openly. It was not long before the Lebanese army surrounded the area, and battles ensued for several days. It was said that some Syrian army units participated in them. This resulted in the martyrdom of about fifty brothers, including Abū

ʿĀʾishah, may Allāh have mercy on him, and some prominent figures among his brothers, veteran Arab Afghans. Some who had connections with them from various Lebanese regions were arrested, according to what I was informed by some brothers and the media. May Allāh grant them relief, and may Allāh have mercy on the righteous martyrs.

Prominent Contemporary Jihādī Experiences in Central Asia

12. The Jihādī Experience in Tajikistan (1992 - 2000)

With the victories of Jihād against the Soviets in Afghanistan, the hopes of Muslims in Central Asia to rid themselves of the yoke of Russian occupation, which had oppressed them and even denied them their religion, were revived. The Farsiwani or Tajik minority, as they are called in northern Afghanistan, played a role during their confrontation with the Soviets in transmitting the seeds of revolution and the flame of Jihād beyond the Amu Darya River. Several Afghan Jihādī parties, notably the Jamiat-e Islami and Hezb-e Islami led by Hekmatyar, also sought to do so by sending copies of the Qurʾān and translated religious books to secret cells of the nascent Islāmic movement in Tajikistan to incite them to Jihād.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the great dream of sincere Afghan mujāhidīn and Arab Afghans was to cross the Amu Darya River to continue Jihād against Moscow. This is what some did following the withdrawal of the Red Army, during which some Afghan party leaders, particularly Rabbani and Massoud, played a shameful role in ensuring its safe passage after it had inflicted upon the Afghans the calamities of killing and the complete destruction of their country. However, a number of Arab, Afghan, and Tajik mujāhidīn crossed the river to become the vanguards of a rich Jihādī experience that lasted from the early 1990s to the end of the twentieth century. I do not possess many details about that experience, other than what I learned from some of those interested in it.

In summary, the mujāhidīn managed to liberate vast areas of Tajikistan, extending from its borders with Afghanistan to its borders with Uzbekistan. In the late 1990s, they were able to threaten the capital, Dushanbe, itself, where the Russian-backed communist regime was genuinely threatened with collapse. According to the testimony of those mujāhidīn involved in that cause, Russian intelligence (KGB) intervened at the last moments and persuaded the famous Afghan commander Massoud and President Rabbani to betray the rear bases of those mujāhidīn in northern Afghanistan, forcing them to withdraw from the capital, allowing the regime to regain its breath. The next stab came from the Tajik Islāmic movement itself and its leader, Professor Nuri, who met Yeltsin in Moscow; television cameras pictured him shaking Yeltsin's hand warmly. An agreement was reached under Moscow's supervision between the Tajik government and the Islāmic Renaissance Party led by Nuri, for a settlement under which the Renaissance Party would receive some ministries and parliamentary seats. Thus, the Renaissance Party demobilized its military wing, which had been participating in the siege of the capital. This created a rift in the Jihādī movement, composed of Tajiks and Uzbeks, in addition to some mujāhidīn from Central Asia, led by the great mujāhid Juma Bai al-Uzbeki. He retreated to the mountains with his men and continued fighting until he was forced to sign a settlement that guaranteed him withdrawal to Afghanistan and asylum under the Taliban regime with his weapons and remaining soldiers. This occurred in 2000, when he came to Afghanistan and joined the Uzbek mujāhidīn and their movement, which they had established in 1998 and named the Islāmic Party of Uzbekistan, under the leadership of Muhammad Tahir Jan. Thus, the curtain fell on a unique Jihādī movement, the detailed recording of which remains a trust upon the necks of those who lived through it closely during that period.

13. The Jihādī Experience in Uzbekistan (1998 - 2001)

Uzbekistan is considered the beating heart of Islām in Central Asia. Muslims there managed to preserve their religion and the religion of their forefathers through a system of secret hujras (rooms/cells) that taught Islām clandestinely, from which thousands of huffaz (memorizers of the Qurʾān) and students of knowledge graduated from Uzbekistan and neighboring Soviet republics. The population of Uzbekistan exceeds 25 million. It is home to major historical Islāmic centers such as Bukhara, Tashkent, Samarkand, and Termez.

The Islāmic Awakening there remained a clandestine movement until the collapse of the Soviet Union and the advent of what was called the era of openness. The communists there donned the garb of democracy, as claimed by its president, Karimov, a former member of the Communist Party who became president of the country and of a democratic party therein, replacing loyalty to the Russians with loyalty to the Americans.

Karimov suppressed the Islāmic Awakening that had emerged since 1990 and entered into conflict with it, leading to the migration of thousands to neighboring countries. After 1995, a number of young Jihādī emigrants turned towards Chechnya, where the mujāhid martyr Ibn al-Khattab was preparing a long-term project to fan the flames of Jihād in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Soviet republics. Meanwhile, a large group of them went to Afghanistan during the Taliban era, and others joined the Tajik mujāhidīn and their Uzbek commander Juma Bai, may Allāh have mercy on him. Other groups remained hidden inside Uzbekistan, preparing for a Jihādī uprising.

The group that settled near the Taliban was led by a young preacher from Jamaat-ut-Tabligh, who was enthusiastic about a broad Jihādī project for an uprising against Karimov's regime. His star had risen as a result of his confrontation with President

Karimov during a mass rally. He then fled to Afghanistan and pledged allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful, Mullah Muhammad Omar, who adopted their project and considered it an important support in northern Afghanistan, where a large Uzbek and Turkmen community of about 5 million people resides.

In cooperation with some Arab Afghans who were enthusiastic about the Uzbek Jihādī project, and with generous support from the Taliban, the Uzbek project under the leadership of Muhammad Tahir Jan grew rapidly. Hundreds of strong young fighters gathered under his command, initially trained by some Arab Afghan instructors. They then developed their capabilities and became one of the most well-trained and well-armed groups supporting the Taliban.

After leaving Tajikistan, Juma Bai joined Muhammad Tahir Jan, pledged allegiance to him for Jihād in Uzbekistan, and became his deputy, military commander, and right-hand man. He later returned to organize the presence of Uzbek mujāhidīn on the borders of Uzbekistan and entered Tajikistan again. However, his attempt was discovered, and he and all his men were nearly killed by the Kyrgyz army. But they managed to kidnap a group of Japanese and foreign experts, and negotiations led to them receiving a ransom of about $5 million and returning to Afghanistan, which raised the movement's standing with the Taliban.

In late 1999, a number of Uzbek mujāhidīn came from Chechnya and, in cooperation with secret groups there, carried out several bombing operations targeting government installations in Uzbekistan. The government responded with a campaign of arrests, as a result of which more Jihādīs and emigrant families fled to Afghanistan. A number of Uzbek Jihādīs were arrested in several Central Asian countries and Turkey, handed over to Uzbekistan, and some were sentenced to prison and others to death. Those who survived flocked to Afghanistan, and these cadres gathered around Tahir Jan, forming a well-organized, disciplined, and well-equipped force. They named their movement the Islāmic Party of Uzbekistan.

Due to the large Uzbek diaspora that had emigrated since the days of Soviet occupation to countries like Turkey, Central Asian nations, Europe, Pakistan, and some Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, many of them were able to become merchants and hold positions after their ancestors obtained Saudi citizenship during King Faisal's era. These communities provided material and human support, as well as communication and public relations capabilities, to this nascent group, which prepared several hundred trained fighters.

In mid-2001, the Commander of the Faithful, Mullah Muhammad Omar, decided, based on a study project I had submitted to him, to form a brigade comprising all Arab and Muslim mujāhidīn who were not Afghans (from Pakistan, Arabs, and Central Asian mujāhidīn). He chose Juma Bai, the Uzbek military commander, to lead and manage this project, which they named Brigade 21 and linked it to the military command of the Taliban army (Qol Ordu). Naturally, Juma Bai utilized his Uzbek military administration to manage this brigade, along with an elite group of commanders from Arabs, Pakistanis, and Turkestanis.

The standing of the Uzbeks with the Taliban grew very strong. Muhammad Tahir Jan developed an ambitious project to cultivate a generation of Uzbek preachers and students of knowledge to work within the large Afghan Uzbek and Turkmen community in northwestern Afghanistan. The program aimed to prepare hundreds of preachers within two years to undertake daʿwah (Islāmic call) and then form Uzbek mujāhid militias whose goal would be to fight alongside the Taliban and subsequently prepare for Jihād in Transoxiana (the lands beyond the Oxus River). This was the great dream of the Afghans since the departure of the Red Army from Afghanistan across the Amu Darya River into the Soviet Union.

The Commander of the Faithful pinned great hopes on this project and supported it with all available resources. Thus, with the beginning of the fighting season in the summer of 2001, the Commander of the Faithful assigned Brigade 21, under the

command of Juma Bai, combat missions in northern Afghanistan in Kunduz and Takhar provinces. While the joint brigade, whose fighters numbered over three thousand mujāhidīn from Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Arabia, and Turkestan, was preparing to take up its positions and move to the battlefield, the events of September occurred, and the American attack on Afghanistan began. Allāh decreed that an aerial bomb would fall in an area near Mazar-i-Sharif on a gathering point for mujāhidīn from that brigade, leading to the martyrdom of Juma Bai along with 12 of the brigade's leaders, among its most prominent Arab and Uzbek commanders, before the fall of Mazar-i-Sharif.

Disasters followed one after another. After the fall of Mazar-i-Sharif, the treachery in Kunduz, and the betrayal of a group of Arab and Uzbek mujāhidīn in the Qala-i-Jangi fortress in Mazar-i-Sharif in the infamous incident, hundreds of Uzbek mujāhidīn were killed in the north. Others fell in the battles defending the Emirate on the Kabul front, then in the famous battle of Shah-i-Kot near the city of Zormat in Paktia, where hundreds of Americans were killed in the operation codenamed "Anaconda." The survivors then dispersed to Pakistan, where many of them were killed in joint campaigns by the Pakistani army and American forces, and others were captured. Still others scattered in a new phase of diaspora, in the post-September chasm in which the remnants of the Jihādī current continue to struggle, until Allāh grants relief. Thus was turned a page of Jihād, one of the brightest and most hopeful for reviving Jihād in the lands of Transoxiana, where the Messenger of Allāh, may Allāh bless him and grant him peace, foretold the emergence of black banners from there, to carry the banners of the Mahdi to fill the earth with equity and justice after it had been filled with tyranny and oppression, as events these days seem to be heading in that direction.

I personally accompanied the Uzbek experience during the Taliban era from its early stages. Friendship, brotherhood, and working relationships bound me to them. I

participated in the preparation program for some cadres for their major project and used to frequent their center to deliver some lectures. Several members of their administration attended a series of qualifying lessons at my home. This enabled me to learn about aspects of their promising major project and also allowed me to get to know some of the finest mujāhidīn in terms of worship, purity, excellent character, discipline, obedience, and strength in adversity and steadfastness. May Allāh have mercy on their martyrs, release their prisoners, protect their displaced, and grant the mujāhidīn in Uzbekistan an opportunity to carry the triumphant banners of Jihād. Indeed, He is powerful over what He wills.

14. The Jihādī Experience of the Mujāhidīn of the Islāmic Party of East Turkestan

Shortly after the Taliban movement announced the Islāmic Emirate, a number of young Turkestani Muslims arrived in Afghanistan. They had fled from Chinese rule, which occupies the land of East Turkestan and persecutes committed youth, continuing China's attempts to erase the identity of that Uyghur Muslim people.

Like other immigrant and mujāhid groups that settled in the vicinity of the Taliban, they began to gather. Their amīr, the martyr brother Abū Muḥammad al-Turkistānī (Hasan Mahsum), may Allāh have mercy on him, emerged as their leader. He had left China as a fugitive after being imprisoned there for five years.

After Sheikh Abū Muḥammad al-Turkistānī pledged allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful, Mullah Muhammad Omar, this group received support and respect from him. However, he ordered them to be cautious in their movement and to maintain as low a profile as possible because China was on the verge of establishing balanced relations with the Taliban and was considering implementing several projects there. This would create a balance in the struggle for interests in Afghanistan and Central Asia between China and the United States. China was close to reopening its embassy

in Kabul during the Taliban era. This group grew rapidly because the number of East Turkestani immigrants scattered in other Central Asian countries, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan was also not insignificant.

Soon, the group, in cooperation with some Arab Afghan trainers, prepared a number of cadres and trainers who quickly established their own independent camp and participated effectively in fighting alongside the Taliban.

Their amīr, Abū Muḥammad, may Allāh have mercy on him, was a beacon of activity, sincerity, and good character. This was reflected in the rapid growth of their group. The East Turkestani youth were among the most compliant, sincere, self-sacrificing mujāhidīn, and eager to seek various types of religious and military knowledge.

Some Turkestani mujāhidīn who graduated from the camps of this movement, which bore the same name as the group that made the last attempts and most of whose members perished (the Islāmic Party of East Turkestan), went to China to carry out mobilization and propaganda activities among those who could not leave due to the travel risks imposed by the Chinese government on Turkestani Muslims.

The East Turkestanis' project was promising, especially in the context of the New World Order. The US Congress had adopted a project in 1995 to dismantle China by exploiting ethnic and religious tensions within it, primarily targeting Tibet and the Uyghur Muslims in northwestern China, in Turkestan, which China occupied and renamed Xinjiang (meaning New Territory). Thus, the Jihād project in China was the only one that had a hope of not encountering resistance from the counter-terrorism onslaught. Furthermore, groups of Uyghur Muslims from nationalist and liberal currents had settled in America, Europe, Turkey, and some Arab countries, and some of them began to court this nascent armed group in Afghanistan. However, the Turkestani mujāhidīn's closeness to the Arab Afghans, their allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful, their witnessing of combat alongside the Taliban, and

the capture of some of them by coalition forces nearly branded them as fugitives sought by America. A portion of the Turkestani mujāhidīn joined Brigade 21 of non-Afghan mujāhidīn and took their positions alongside mujāhidīn of other nationalities in the Jihād with the Taliban. While the Turkestani mujāhidīn's project was also making headway, the September explosions occurred, and the Turkestani mujāhidīn took their positions alongside their Afghan and non-Afghan brothers.

Thus, the Turkestani mujāhidīn also had their share of martyrs, prisoners, and displaced persons. May Allāh accept from them. Their remnants emerged to continue their journey in the caravan of those fleeing with their religion, strangers on Pakistani soil.

Although the opportunity to leave was available to their amīr, Sheikh Abū Muḥammad al-Turkistānī, he remained loyal to the Commander of the Faithful and Afghanistan, and loyal to Turkestan, insisting on remaining close to it. He stayed in the tribal region of Sarhad in northwestern Pakistan. A month before writing these lines, in November, the Pakistani army, supported by American units, launched a combing and search operation for Arab mujāhidīn, Taliban, and those with them. One of the criminal groups clashed with a group of mujāhidīn that included Abū Muḥammad and his brothers. He fell as a martyr, a stranger, along with a group of his guards and closest brothers. May Allāh have mercy on them, accept them, and grant them spacious dwellings in His Paradise.

I personally accompanied the East Turkestan project from its inception. Their amīr, Abū Muḥammad, was my neighbor in Khost, may Allāh have mercy on him. He invited me to deliver some lessons at their center several times. When I decided to start the project of establishing a camp in Kabul, he received me in Qargha at his camp, which was affiliated with the camp of the Taliban commander Saif al-Rahman Mansur. There, I began my camp project alongside theirs before our camp (the Strangers' Camp) developed and became independent next to their camp.

More than one bond united me and the Strangers' Camp group with the Turkestani mujāhidīn. We witnessed some field scenes alongside the Taliban together. I remember them today, and my pen is truly incapable of doing them justice for the noble qualities they possessed. Today, my heart aches with pain and sorrow for those luminous faces and pure hearts, and I am unable to describe them adequately, for they were worthy of all good. I consider them as such, and I do not sanctify them before Allāh. How well did the poet say, addressing the soil of the martyrs' graves:

In you, beloved ones reside, O beloved place,
And residence may cause pain, or it may grace.
Suns at midday, extinguished by a drunken hand,
Gathered up by the sunset, across the land.
Faces that mingled with my heart and disappeared in you,
So how can they from my heart be gone from view?
Shall I follow them, washed in light so pure,
While my heart, after, by sins is still obscured?

May Allāh have mercy on those who met Him as martyrs and accept them among the righteous. May He protect the displaced and remaining among them, grant them victory, and help them carry the torches of light and Islām, so that the call to prayer may return, melodious and free, in the lands of Kashgar and all cities of Turkestan. May Allāh have mercy on them, like breezes carrying the fragrance of the banners of Qutaybah ibn Muslim, who brought the light of Islām to their lands, and the breaths of thousands of righteous successors and those who followed them in excellence, who carried the torch of Islām to those regions.

O Allāh, do not deprive us of their company in Paradise, nor deprive us of their reward, nor test us after them, and have mercy on us when we come to You like them, O Lord of the worlds.

15. The Experience of Sheikh Osama and the Al-Qaeda Organization in Confronting America Since 1996

As is well known, this title deserves a separate book due to its numerous details and historical importance, and this general chapter on the experiences of the Jihādī current during the second half of the twentieth century is not the place for it. However, for this chapter to be complete and to include the most important of these experiences, I must, albeit briefly, address this experience, which concluded the file of those experiences in the twentieth century and opened the file of conflict in the twenty-first century in a way that changed the face of history and the world, and altered the dimensions, data, and methods of the battle. I will present this experience through concise main paragraphs, and Allāh is the one whose help is sought, and He guides to the right path. Perhaps Allāh will make it easy for me to elaborate on the details if He decrees that I should chronicle the experience of the second phase of the Arab Afghans with the Taliban (1996 - 2001).

Before I begin, I should point out that I have thought a great deal about the issue of classifying the Al-Qaeda experience within the experiences of the Jihādī current, or classifying it as a type of Jihādī phenomenon against external aggression. I almost leaned towards considering it a third category of Jihādī phenomena due to its differences in formation, methodology, and style. After long reflection, I decided to include it within the experiences of the Jihādī current for several important considerations, among them:

- The methodology that Sheikh Osama bin Laden and most of his followers ultimately adopted and declared. It is a methodology that can be considered based on the principles and foundations of the Jihādī current's methodology.
- Another matter is that most of Al-Qaeda's cadres, founders, trainers, and key personnel are from the Jihādī current who joined Al-Qaeda organically, or Al-Qaeda relied on them in forming its elements.

- The third matter is that Sheikh Osama made confronting the Saudi regime one of the two prongs of his direction and objectives, in addition to confronting America. This aligns with the orientation of Jihādī current organizations in confronting the tyrants ruling Arab and Islāmic countries, whom they considered apostates from the religion of Islām, basing this on the principles of the doctrine of God's sovereignty (ḥākimiyyah) and the creeds of Salafi Jihādism.
- The fourth matter is that Sheikh Osama managed to draw the entire Jihādī current into the arena he chose and the idea he advocated for confrontation, which is the shift from confronting regimes and governments to confronting those who support them within the New World Order, namely America and its major allies.
- The final matter is that America, for its own purposes, knowingly and deliberately, imposed upon the entire Jihādī current and many components of the current Jihādī phenomenon the label of Al-Qaeda, generalizing it to them whether they liked it or not, and made it a comprehensive name for all components of the Jihādī current, dragging them into its war as well, willingly or unwillingly.

After long reflection, consultation, and seeking divine guidance (istikhārah),

I decided to remove this section from the book for three reasons:

First: The Al-Qaeda organization is still engaged in an open war with the enemies of Islām, led by America, as are all Arab Afghans, the Jihādī current, and every sincere person in this ummah.
Some may think that discussing its experience and characteristics now might benefit the enemy. Although I do not believe so, because the section is a general critical study for deriving lessons from past experiences and does not contain any information considered secret – especially since a large number of Al-Qaeda

prisoners are in enemy hands, may Allāh help us to alleviate their suffering – and I believe there is benefit for Muslims and mujāhidīn in presenting it. However, this was one of the reasons for deleting the section, to avoid disagreement on this point.

Second: The experience is still ongoing and thus differs from the previous organizational experiences I have discussed, which have practically ended. Delaying writing about an ongoing experience is beneficial for studying it later, as the study will be more comprehensive and profound.
I hope that we will have achieved the promised victory by then, by Allāh's permission.

Third: The experience is extensive and, to do it justice, requires a separate book, which perhaps Allāh will make it easy for me to produce later. Especially since I prefer to have some senior brothers and sheikhs review it and take their recommendations into account before its publication, which I hope will be soon, and after the comprehensive victory is achieved, Allāh willing.

I apologize to the readers eager to learn about the unique experience of magnificent heroes and beloved ones whose loss is a great tragedy. Most of them, I hope and believe, Allāh willing, have inscribed their names in the register of immortal martyrs.

Eighth: Summary of the Doctrinal and Intellectual Foundations of the Jihādī Current (1960 - 2001)

The Jihādī current formed an independent, self-contained school within the contemporary Islāmic Awakening. Most of its organizations and members shared common elements of Jihādī thought, doctrine, and religio-political methodology. I will briefly outline its most important features, regardless of my personal opinion on some details and ideas, as this section is for presentation, not discussion. This is

also irrespective of some secondary ideas held by certain Jihādīs that were not a common characteristic of the current, its main organizations, or its key figures. Among the most important intellectual features of the Jihādīs are:

Ruling on Regimes:

Jihādīs considered all existing regimes in Arab and Islāmic countries to be apostate regimes because they legislate without Allāh's permission, rule by other than what Allāh has revealed, and ally themselves with the disbelievers, enemies of Islām and Muslims. Consequently, they considered all rulers in the Arab and Islāmic world to be disbelievers, apostates, and outside the fold of Islām.

They also considered the three branches of government – if they exist – or their equivalents in dictatorial regimes, to be infidel institutions. These branches are: the legislative authority, the executive authority, and the judicial authority. They considered senior officials in these branches to be disbelievers and apostates.

The limits of specific excommunication (takfīr ʿaynī) for Jihādīs stop at this level. They consider those below this level, such as their assistants, deputies, and employees, to be collaborators who are not judged as specific disbelievers for their work in these institutions, and they consider them to have potential excuses.

In this, they align with the general thought of the Islāmic Awakening during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, before Islāmic organizations took a democratic turn and were compelled to rule that these institutions were Islāmic. It is worth noting that these truths, which Jihādīs proclaimed and for which they endured tragedies, were the same beliefs held by most figures of the Islāmic Awakening, including the Muslim Brotherhood, Salafists, Sururists, and Awakening preachers from the scholars of the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere.

Ruling on Auxiliaries:

Jihādīs considered those who fight in defense of these regimes and combat Islamists and Jihādīs – such as members of the army, police, and security forces – to be a generally apostate faction fighting under the banner of general apostasy of their leader and commander, whose orders they obey and whom they defend. However, Jihādīs do not rule on the specific disbelief of individuals among them unless an act that nullifies faith is committed.

The Issue of Takfīr (Excommunication):

They adhere to the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah (the People of the Sunnah and the Community) and consider everyone who testifies that there is no god but Allāh and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh to be a Muslim, unless they commit a clear act that nullifies Islām. They apply the conditions for excommunicating a specific individual, which include the fulfillment of conditions and the absence of impediments, such as ignorance, coercion, misinterpretation, and lack of intent. In this, they differ from extremist takfīr groups and the outliers among some who have associated themselves with Jihādīs.

Scholars of the Sultan (State Scholars):

Jihādīs consider any Muslim scholar who sides with these governments, defends them, bestows upon them the attribute of Islām, and considers those who rebel against them from the men and movements of the Awakening, especially Jihādīs, to be Kharijites, as hypocrites. Jihādīs have engaged in lengthy debates with them. Jihādīs are divided into two groups regarding the level of hypocrisy of state scholars. The majority asserts their Islām and considers their hypocrisy to be within the bounds of hypocrisy of action. Some, however, consider some of these scholars to be disbelievers and apostates like their rulers, because they believe these scholars have

no excuse of ignorance, misinterpretation, or coercion, as they willingly engage in this hypocrisy, which has reached the point of endorsing the invasion of Muslim lands, permitting peace with the Jews, and selling off the holiest Muslim sanctities. It has also reached the point of issuing fatwas to kill those who take up arms against those rulers and their Crusader invader allies.

The Issue of Democracy:

Jihādīs consider democracy, as a philosophy and a system, to be a system of disbelief that contradicts the religion of Islām in its entirety. Some go as far as to consider it a modern religion, like all ancient and modern religions of disbelief. The majority of Jihādīs consider Islamists who participate in democracy by entering parliament and taking part in the legislative authority or ministries and governments (executive authorities) to be engaged in an act of disbelief. However, they do not rule on their specific disbelief, considering them excused by misinterpretation or even sometimes by ignorance of the disbelieving nature of these institutions, due to the state of weakness of the Awakening and Muslims, and their intention to achieve whatever justice and cooperation in righteousness and goodness they can. A minority of Jihādīs excommunicate these Islamist parliamentarians and ministers based on their affiliation with these institutions, not considering their ignorance plausible as scholars or preachers, nor their misinterpretation acceptable after the establishment of proof and extensive dialogue.

The Issue of Shiʿa and Non-Sunni Sects:

Jihādīs consider all these sects to be part of the Islāmic ummah or what is called Ahl al-Qiblah (People of the Qibla). They consider them to be among the sects mentioned in the noble Ḥadīth about the nation splitting into 73 sects, one of which is saved (Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah) and the rest are in the Fire. Thus, they consider them sects of misguidance, deviation, caprice, and error. As is the general

Sunni position, they classify them into three categories:
Extreme Shiʿa (Ghulāt): Such as Isma'ilis, Nusayris, and similar groups, whom they consider disbelievers.
Zaydi Shiʿa: Such as the majority of Shiʿa in Yemen. They consider them close to Sunnis, despite disagreements.
Jaʿfari (Imami) Shiʿa: These constitute the majority of Shiʿa in Iran, and minorities in Lebanon, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Middle East.
The majority of Jihādīs consider them misguided people of innovation (bidʿah). A minority of Jihādīs, for political reasons, did not give this issue importance. Some Jihādīs, however, openly declared the disbelief of the Shiʿa. Nevertheless, the majority of Jihādīs consider them Muslims from Ahl al-Qiblah, who are misguided innovators.
Political issues have intertwined with doctrinal ones in this matter for the Sunni Islāmic Awakening in general, including the Jihādī current, but this is not the place to elaborate.

The Issue of Salafism and Madhhabism (Adherence to Schools of Law):

Since the late 1980s, the Salafi school of thought has predominated among Jihādīs, as I explained earlier. The majority of them hold a moderate position on the issue of madhhabism, respecting the imams of the four schools of law and their scholars. They are moderate in taqlīd (following a school of law), neither fanatically adhering to one madhhab, nor strictly committing to it, nor disparaging the status of the imams or the scholarly value of the madhhab heritage. The extremist Salafi current influenced the emergence of some "ignorant extremist Jihādīs" among the later generations who went to the extreme of combating taqlīd and madhhabs, but they are a minority among Jihādīs.

The Issue of Sufism:

The majority of Jihādīs were influenced by the methodology of Ibn Taymiyyah and the Salafi school in combating deviant Sufi schools, considering them methodologies of innovation and misguidance. Some were very strict on this issue, while a minority among them adopted a moderate approach to the school of Sufism and Sufis.

Position on Non-Jihādī Islāmic Awakening Schools:

The majority of veteran Jihādīs respect other Awakening schools and their leaderships and adhere to the etiquette of disagreement with them, despite the wide gap in thought and application. The majority of later Jihādīs are in a state of animosity, hostility, and conflict with them, as a result of feelings of oppression and betrayal, as previously indicated.

The Issue of Secularism:

All Jihādīs excommunicate secular ideologies, considering them doctrines of atheism, as do most leaders, scholars, and groups of the Islāmic Awakening, before the recent American wave and the fashion of artificial moderation. However, the majority of Jihādīs consider followers of secular thought from the general Muslim populace to be excused by their ignorance, while they excommunicate the leaders of secular currents in the Arab and Islāmic world, considering them imams of disbelief who revile the religion of Allāh.

The Issue of Arab Nationalism:

All Jihādīs consider the call to nationalism and fanaticism for it to be among the calls of Jāhiliyyah (pre-Islāmic ignorance). Jihādīs are internationalist, calling for the unity of Muslims and their comprehensive system. Consequently, many of them reject the methodologies of nationalist parties, especially since all or most of them

combine the idea of secularism with nationalism. Jihādīs consider nationalist calls to be among the causes of the ummah's fragmentation.

The Issue of Patriotism:

As with nationalism, Jihādīs reject the idea of regionalism, patriotism, and working within the framework of nationalistic fanaticism, especially since it has been mixed with nationalism and secularism. Therefore, they oppose its advocates and consider it a doctrine of disbelief and misguidance.
In the previous two points, there is some contradiction in the reality of Jihādīs, as most of their organizations have operated on a local, country-specific basis and have sometimes been characterized by extremism in this regard, even though their ideology is based on the internationalism of Islām and the call to Jihād.

The Palestinian Cause:

All Jihādīs, and indeed the generality of the Islāmic Awakening, believe that Palestine, from the river to the sea and from north to south, is part of the Islāmic world and an obligatory right upon the generations of the ummah. They believe Jihād is an obligation to reclaim it. Thus, they reject all principles of conciliation, normalization, and peace with the Jews. They consider the majority of Israelis, with the exception of a few thousand original Jews and their descendants, to be foreign invaders who must leave. They consider the Palestinian Authority under Yasser Arafat to be like other apostate governments in the Arab and Islāmic world, for the same reasons, in addition to treason.

The Issue of Religious Minorities in the Arab and Islāmic World:

Jihādīs believe that these minorities, mostly Christians, should be treated, in the event of the establishment of an Islāmic state, according to the rulings pertaining to Ahl al-Dhimmah (protected non-Muslims) as found in Sunni jurisprudence books.

They do not consider the concept of citizenship as the basis for dealing with them or with those in similar situations.

The Issue of Confrontation with America and Conflict with the West:

Not all Jihādī organizations, from their inception in the 1960s until the start of the military campaign against Afghanistan in November 2001, had proposed or adopted the issue of military confrontation with the United States of America. Almost without exception, all of them were focused on their specific goals of confronting the governments of their own countries.

Although most Jihādī literature had devoted space to the issue of confrontation with America, especially after the Gulf War (Desert Storm), the launch of the New World Order, and the beginning of the American-led international campaign against terrorism, as well as America's support for regimes that suppress Islamists and Jihādīs, this did not translate from literature into a practical operational orientation. Sheikh Osama bin Laden tried extensively during the second phase of the Arab Afghans to persuade Jihādīs to shift their work towards America (the "head of the snake," as he described it), but to no avail. They were methodologically dominated by the idea of conflict with the apostates, who represented the closest and most dangerous enemy, an obstacle to any Jihād against external enemies. They were also dominated by the idea of Jihād to establish Islāmic rule as the key to resolving all crises.

However, the events of September [2001] and their repercussions on the ground, the American branding of the entire Jihādī current under the label of Al-Qaeda, the pursuit of Jihādīs of all nationalities in the context of what it called the "war on terror," the destruction of most of the Jihādī current's infrastructure, and the subsequent occupation of Iraq from 2001 to the present, the successive repercussions of the uprising, Bush's declaration of "crusades," etc., made the sole practical orientation for Jihādīs the confrontation of America and its Western allies.

Thus, America succeeded in compelling Jihādīs towards the "correct" direction in a short time, so that the orientation of all its factions, remnants, and nascent offshoots became confined to this direction.
{And they plan, and Allāh plans, and Allāh is the best of planners.} (Al-Anfāl: 30).

Ninth: The Jihādī Current and the Depth of the Crisis at the End of the Twentieth Century (1995 - 2000)

The Jihādī Awakening had engaged in real and extensive confrontations with some governments during the 1970s and 1980s, suffering many casualties, expanding its popular base, and becoming subject to intelligence-style security pursuits.

The Afghan gateway, opened for Jihād since 1984 to the Islāmic Awakening in general and the Jihādī current in particular, had lured most of its leaders to Afghanistan, where they underwent a unique experience during 1984-1992. The security storm orchestrated by America, executed by Pakistan, and followed up by Arab and European countries after the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of America's need for Islāmic support against the Russians, led to consequences.

Most Jihādī cadres and those wanted by security services in their home countries due to clashes with their governments dispersed to political asylum havens that opened up in Western Europe and similar places like Canada and Australia, or to other Arab countries where their governments' reach could not extend due to the lack of security cooperation agreements between those countries at the time.

However, successive American administrations after the Second Gulf War (Desert Storm) developed a comprehensive plan to confront the Jihādī current, termed the "international confrontation against terrorism," which Bush Jr. later escalated into a genuine world war after September [2001], as we shall see, Allāh willing.

Thus, regional and international security conferences followed one after another during that decade, at a rate of no less than one or more every six months. The Madrid Peace Conference between Arabs and Jews for normalization in 1991 touched upon the issue of terrorism, and the Sharm El-Sheikh Summit in 1994 was dedicated to it. Dozens of global conferences followed thereafter up to the present. The United States of America attended all these conferences, including those specific to Mediterranean countries (!), as did Israel and most Arab states. Conferences of Arab Interior Ministers continued in Tunis, and Saudi Arabia and its minister, Nayef bin Abdulaziz, who was fiercely enthusiastic about combating terrorism, played a prominent role. The global counter-terrorism program during this decade can be summarized by the following points:

Broad Outlines of Global Counter-Terrorism Programs (1990 - 2000):

1. **Drying Up Financial Sources:**
   This plan included imposing strict control over the financial resources of Jihādī and "fundamentalist" movements, which America and its subservient Muslim rulers label as "terrorist." Decisions and measures were taken to review bank balances, monitor bank transfers, zakat disbursements, charitable committee activities, and Islāmic humanitarian institutions. Decisions were made to confiscate funds, monitor accounts, and freeze assets, plunging most Jihādī movements into severe financial distress and significantly reducing their resources.

2. **Targeting Jihādī Leaders and Cadres through Killing and Capture:**
   America initiated this policy with the assassination of Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, may Allāh have mercy on him, using the intelligence services of Benazir Bhutto and her interior minister, Naseerullah Babar. This was shortly preceded by the mysterious death of Sheikh Tamim al-Adnani in America.

Then, a number of leaders of the Egyptian Jihād and the Islamic Group were assassinated or kidnapped from various countries. Anwar Shaaban, the amīr of Arab mujāhidīn in Bosnia, was assassinated, and the amīr of the Islamic Group, Talaat Fouad Qassem, who was a refugee in Denmark, was kidnapped from Croatia and transported by an American helicopter to a ship in the Mediterranean, then abducted to Egypt. Dr. Omar Abdel Rahman was arrested in America, and ludicrous charges were fabricated against him, leading to a sentence of over 200 years in prison. The campaign reached Jihādī cadres in France, Italy, Britain, and elsewhere. Imprisonment even affected scholars and figures whose preaching indirectly revived Jihād in Arab countries. Ali Belhadj was arrested in Algeria, Sheikh Safar al-Hawali, Sheikh Salman al-Ouda, and about ten other senior Awakening scholars were arrested in Saudi Arabia. Jihādīs were kidnapped from multiple countries, including Azerbaijan, Thailand, the Philippines, some Arab countries, and Pakistan, and were thrown into prisons or faced an unknown fate. It seemed that matters were heading towards a real security storm.

3. **Extradition Agreements and Exchange of "Terrorists" (Jihādīs) Between Different Countries:**
   Considering that Arab and most Islāmic countries have no regard for human rights or legal legitimacy, the plan to extradite every wanted security individual to their home country was the most effective way to dismantle Jihādī groups and exhaust their cadres and members. Thus, Arab and Islāmic countries exchanged many Jihādī detainees, who were handed over to an unknown fate in their homelands. Some Western countries, which claim to respect such laws and rights, even committed such acts, and innocent brothers and sometimes their families were handed over to their countries.

4. **Eliminating Safe Havens:**

   President Clinton was the first to announce this measure in this صيغة (form/wording) in 1995. A campaign of security pursuits against Jihādīs began in Europe and various parts of the world. Most cadres of the Arab Afghans and the Jihādī current had dispersed to some European countries as refugees or had settled in Sudan, Yemen, Iran, or Turkey. Some Jihādīs from North Africa settled in Syria and Jordan, while some remained in Pakistan and a few in Afghanistan. The American pressure campaign began under Clinton under this banner. Sheikh Osama bin Laden and the Egyptian and Libyan Jihādīs, along with most of those remaining, were expelled from Sudan. The Sudanese "Islāmic" government, led by Bashir and Turabi, handed over Libyan brothers to their country to be executed! Yemen expelled Jihādīs under the threat of arresting their women; Islāmic and tribal leaders mediated and agreed with the Yemeni government to expel the brothers with their women and children. Syria, Jordan, and Turkey arrested Jihādī brothers and handed them over to their countries; the rest fled. The Americans undertook the removal of Arab mujāhidīn from Bosnia and the disarmament of those who remained after they had shed their blood for their brothers in faith and religion. The Bosnian government itself assassinated their leaders! Thus, the earth, despite its vastness, became constricted for the mujāhidīn from 1995 and in the following years.

5. **Shifting Security Cooperation from Regional to International:**

   International security agreements with complex operational details were concluded, and programs for monitoring routine communications were established. Intelligence agencies were linked at the information and communication levels through highly efficient cooperation plans.

6. **Expansion of Counter-Terrorism Legislation:**
   Western countries and America amended much of their legislation and enacted laws worse than the customary laws applied in the Third World to eliminate avenues for political asylum and foreigners' rights. They expanded counter-terrorism laws to such an extent that in Britain, France, and Scandinavian countries – home to the oldest Western democracies – writing, criticism, and Friday sermons inciting against dictatorial rulers were considered crimes! This was done through vaguely worded legal margins and texts, open to interpretations and reinterpretations according to the whims of intelligence agencies and hateful Crusader leaderships.

7. **Media War to Discredit and Isolate the Mujāhidīn:**
   From the moment the security and military campaign to combat what they called "terrorism" was launched, a parallel media and propaganda campaign began to tarnish the Jihādīs, their principles, and their practices, portraying them as mere bloodthirsty killers and religious extremists who do not carry a message of tolerance and dialogue, among other accusations. The media campaign between Jihādīs and those accusing them of takfīr aimed to isolate them from their popular base. Official religious institutions allied with governments in Arab and Muslim countries played the most malicious roles and supplied this global campaign with its deadliest weapons. Parasites from within the "democratic" Islāmic Awakening, who during that decade became part of the elite and the entourage of sultans, and consequently part of the components of the New World Order, also played an exceedingly detrimental role, as we will detail somewhat in the chapter on the Jihādī Awakening, Allāh willing.

Thus, this American-led global campaign to combat terrorism resulted in transforming the leaders, cadres, and members of Jihādī movements into elements living under the specter of "fear and hunger." The pursuits, assassinations, kidnappings, imprisonments, and closure of safe havens plunged individuals of the Jihādī Awakening into anxieties of fear and pursuit. The plans to dry up financial sources took care of cutting off their livelihoods and the sustenance of their families and children, who had journeyed with them to the easts and wests of the earth, scattered and seared by the fires of this contemporary ordeal for believers.

Then Allāh granted that small group of believers a temporary reprieve with the establishment of the Islāmic Emirate in Afghanistan, which became a sanctuary where the elite of the Jihādī current, both leadership and rank-and-file, gathered during the period 1996-2001. Therefore, the counter-terrorism program focused on striking and destroying it, and destroying the ground that sheltered it, represented by the Taliban movement and the Commander of the Faithful, Mullah Muhammad Omar. This is what they executed in September 2001, to begin the next stage in the path of the Awakening in the post-September world, as we shall see, Allāh willing.

These external conditions and crises surrounding the Jihādī current exacerbated its internal crises, both at the general current level and specific to each experience in its respective region. These crises began to become increasingly clear to everyone, after their harbingers had appeared to some since the early 1990s and since the launch of the New World Order. These crises can be summarized as follows:

1. Security Crises:

The escalation of counter-Jihādī group efforts from the national to the regional, then to the Arab, and finally to the international level, led to the encirclement of these organizations, inflicting heavy losses on them, and neutralizing most of their operational methods, communications, and funding. Previously, when most leaders of Jihādī organizations operating in their country found themselves in a tight

security situation due to arrests, torture, and the failure of hierarchical organizations to withstand the brutal methods of security agencies in arrests, investigations, and the local quashing of groups, they would move to neighboring countries, benefiting from the margins of disagreement between the ruling regimes in those states. Many of them managed to secure for themselves and their leaderships a margin of safe haven, and sometimes even bases for movement and support for their cause from neighboring countries. This characterized the period 1975-1995. For instance, the Fighting Vanguard in Syria, as well as the Muslim Brotherhood organization, during their confrontation with Hafez al-Assad's Nusayri regime, sought refuge in Iraq from an early stage, then Jordan. There, they received significant support from the governments of both countries, reaching the extent of training, armament, material support, and facilitation of border crossings. Turkey also turned a blind eye to them, and they used its territory for movement and communications. Some, albeit to a much lesser extent, managed to gain a foothold in Lebanon, though limited due to Syrian control. Support for Jihād in Syria even reached the point where Egypt, in the last days of Anwar Sadat, supported it and provided training services that would have developed further had Sadat not been assassinated by Jihādīs in 1981.

Conversely, Iraqi opposition organizations, mostly Shiʿa, received similar support in Syria.

Jihādīs from Egypt were able to move freely in most countries of the region and use them as bases for communication and support, starting from the Gulf states and passing through Syria, Jordan, Yemen, and others, without facing any pursuit.

Similarly, fugitives from Libya moved in neighboring countries. Jihādīs in Morocco received support in Libya and moved freely in the region. Jihādīs in Algeria transited through Morocco, using it as a conduit for weapons and fighters, and as rest areas for the wounded and combatants. The Egyptian Jihād organization operated from Sudan between 1990-1997 and established footholds in Yemen along with other

Jihādī organizations. Some of its members received training in Lebanon in Hezbollah camps, and leaders of the Islamic Group were able to find refuge and sanctuary in Iran, among other examples.

These margins were not limited to Jihādīs and Islamists. Most political oppositions during that period benefited from these margins, as did Palestinian nationalist, patriotic, and Islāmic organizations. However, after the fall of the old world order, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the Warsaw Pact, there were no longer conflicting blocs. The commanding master of these regimes became one: America. There was no longer a margin between an Eastern and a Western master. Orders came from the new master, the sole superpower, to these regimes to close those havens. They began to close gradually. Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz, the Saudi Minister of Interior, took charge of Arab security coordination and established the Conference of Arab Interior Ministers, headquartered in Tunis. The ministers of "war against Allāh, His Messenger, and the believers" (i.e., Interior Ministers) began meeting every six months. Their deputies held permanent meetings, and their intelligence chiefs had open red telephone lines. The level of coordination rose to linking information archives via computer, and the pursuit of Jihādīs became regional among some states, then soon transformed to the Arab level. Jihādī leaders and pursued cadres moved their centers of operation to the global level after the collapse of Jihād in Afghanistan. These various organizations adopted a developed method of operating through distant safe havens, especially from political asylum areas in the West and some European countries, where personal freedom laws formed a protective shield for Islamist and Jihādī activists.

However, American pressure, demands from Arab and Islāmic governments, and the entry of most European and other countries into the American campaign, which acted like the maestro of a grand symphony orchestra in combating the Islāmic Awakening and its Jihādī vanguard, caused these margins to be eliminated one after another. The security agencies of these countries also joined the pursuit, leading to

many figures falling captive and detained. Some were handed over to their home countries, and those who survived fled to Afghanistan towards the end of 1996.

The security crisis did not end, because Afghanistan, which had formed a sanctuary, also became a new problem – an area of restricted movement and activity due to the Taliban's policy of limiting their activities to avoid increased pressure. It became a place of de facto house arrest, where people around it were snatched at every attempt to move, and few of the fugitives escaped those traps.

The issue of eliminating margins in the New World Order was not limited to Jihādīs and their organizations. It extended to all organizations engaged in clandestine guerrilla warfare worldwide. Thus, Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), was handed over to the Ankara government, and the curtain fell on a guerrilla war that had lasted more than twenty years against Turkey, because the global system closed off their havens in Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. Their leader was forced to wander and was then arrested through international efforts in which even Greece, Turkey's enemy, participated.

Similarly, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) found itself forced into a political settlement and to lay down its arms.

The Basque separatist group ETA retreated after France closed off its narrow havens. Its leaders were pursued in Europe, Latin America, and elsewhere.

Thus, experienced Jihādīs began to discover that the world of the New World Order, which began after the fall of the Soviet Union, had eliminated the possibility of country-specific revolutions and operating through margins. The new world had become unipolar, with a single master imposing on states the closure of margins, especially against "fundamentalist Islamic extremists" or "terrorists," as they became known in the media. The insightful among them realized that the theory of movement upon which they had based their actions had shattered against the realities of this world. Furthermore, these ten years had proven the failure of country-specific revolutions managed by non-field leaders from exile, due to the

impossibility of managing them on the ground because of the brutal oppression, arrests, and torture perpetrated by governments without accountability or oversight.

2. Financial Crises:

The policy of "drying up the sources," imposed by America and implemented by all countries worldwide, led by the existing regimes in the Arab and Islāmic world, halted most channels of financial support from donations, which had been the sole lifeline for the continuation of these organizations' work. This was especially true when Gulf states, upon their masters' orders, imposed policies of surveillance on Zakat channels, charitable donations, and the activities of charitable associations. They imposed strict controls on banks and money transfer systems, similar to what was done with international banks. America and Western countries applied strict policies to prevent any funds from reaching Jihādī organizations or associations accused of supporting "extremism," as they termed it. Thus, most Jihādī leaders were confined in Afghanistan, leaving behind hundreds or thousands of families whose breadwinners had been arrested, with no one left to care for them.

The remaining cells in those countries also found themselves in a financial predicament, cut off from their dispersed leadership not only organizationally and administratively but also financially, crippling their ability to move and grow.

3. Internal Organizational Crises:

As a result of the security and financial crises, most Jihādī leaders transformed into exiled, dispersed figures, cut off from their operational arenas. This generated numerous organizational crises, causing paralysis in administration and a lack of dynamism in movement. This problem, combined with the internal and external security issues and the financial crisis due to the drying up of resources, led to the cessation of human growth for most Jihādī organizations within their fields of operation. Their numbers became limited, and they began to expend their human

losses, both internally and externally, from a finite reserve, thus heading towards extinction. Security conditions and the disappearance of those remaining inside, along with the flight of most cadres and leaders capable of guidance, also led to the suspension of education and training programs for the remaining or newly recruited elements. There was virtually no recruitment, no educational programs, and no preparation for recruits. Because crises and defeats usually generate situations where:

{So they turned to one another, blaming each other} (Al-Qalam: 30). And as ʿUmar, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: "These hands were created to work; if they do not find work in good, they will find work in evil." The phenomenon of schisms began to spread.

Some youths and some first or second-tier leaders in the organizations believed that the cause of stagnation and incapacity was the incompetence of the existing leadership. They did not realize that their leaders' problem was their misfortune in leading "country-specific, clandestine, hierarchical" organizations in the era of the New World Order, out of historical context and geographical reality of the ummah. The New World Order imposed its realities, and the crises became too large to solve. The system of operation itself had collapsed and was no longer viable. But those dissidents thought their "perfumer" could fix what time had ruined. Numerous schisms occurred, and what I have called in some lectures the phenomenon of "amoebic organizations" appeared, due to the excessive division and fragmentation. This even affected nascent organizations and groups that were splitting and splintering from their earliest stages! These schisms occurred internally in the original arenas of confrontation for the organizations, as well as in external arenas. Thus, since the early 1990s, and especially since 1995, most of these renowned organizations lost their capabilities.

However, some low-quality, limited-circulation publications did emerge from various quarters. These often transformed into media organizations that, for the

most part, performed poorly. Practically, nothing was advancing in the Jihād arena except for the horrific events in Algeria, which caused immeasurable harm to the obligation of Jihād and the Jihādī current. This experience became a testing ground for Algerian, Arab, and Western intelligence agencies, as I detailed in my book, *My Testimony on Jihād in Algeria 1989-1996*.

4. Intellectual Crises

As previously mentioned, the intellectual foundations of the Jihādī current were laid in the mid-1960s by Sheikh Sayyid Qutb, may Allāh have mercy on him. The various additions written within the framework of the Muslim Brotherhood's literature offered practically nothing new, being mere repetitions, interpretations, and rephrasing. Most of them lacked a Jihādī spirit. The Salafī jurisprudential details can be noted when the jurisprudence of Imām Ibn Taymiyyah was presented as the basis for Jihādī jurisprudence by the Jihād Organization and the Islamic Group in Egypt, forming a second intellectual phase in the late 1970s. The third addition was what the literature of the Arab Afghans offered in the late 1980s. This was practically a repetition of Qutbist activist thought and Salafī jurisprudence from the heritage of the Wahhābī school. Despite its comprehensiveness, this body of literature did not contain important concepts that could constitute a development commensurate with new circumstances and the intellectual, cultural, social, and political problems that arose in the Arab and Islāmic worlds after the establishment of the New World Order. Signs of an intellectual crisis began to appear within the Jihādī current.

Foremost among these intellectual crises was that none of the Jihādī organizations presented in their literature an integrated project for their transformative program on the political, social, and cultural levels. To the masses, especially the educated sector of the Ummah, they seemed to be swimming in the past, isolated from the contemporary problems of the Ummah. The jurisprudence of reality was largely

absent from their proposals and literature. The Arab and Islāmic reality and its problems did not receive due attention as a result of the stagnation that characterized the contemporary Salafī school in general – Salafī Jihādism being a part of it. The second major crisis was the uncontrolled repercussions of the Salafī jurisprudential method among young Jihādī students of knowledge. In the latter half of the 1990s, a jurisprudence of extremism and dogmatism prevailed, due to the ignorance of some opportunists who infiltrated the Jihādī current in the absence of authentic writers during that phase, and due to the spread of excommunicatory publications on the fringes of the Jihādī and Salafī currents, and the exploitation and exaggeration of these aberrations by intelligence agencies. The clear distinction and a dividing wall between Jihādī thought and excommunicatory thought began to diminish in the eyes of the Muslim public during that period. I will elaborate on this problem at the end of the seventh and final chapter of the first part, if Allāh wills.

The critical security conditions did not allow senior Jihādīs and their prominent figures to operate in comfortable circumstances that would enable them to write and respond to this dangerous phenomenon. Furthermore, the influx of many new elements into Jihādī strongholds, most of whom were youth from an Arab reality burdened with problems and psychological pressures, coupled with the lack of favorable conditions for intellectual upbringing, created a major problem. An atmosphere of extremism and ignorance prevailed among many Jihādī followers during that period, especially in various havens in Europe and some countries like Yemen, Pakistan, and others.

Other intellectual problems included the inability of Jihādīs to define specific concepts and clear details for important terms and issues that arose due to the project of Jihādī confrontation with the pre-Islāmic (ignorant) regimes. Among these were:

The Sharīʿah-based concept of the Jihādī group in its region, and whether it is tantamount to the community of Muslims. The issue of the legitimacy of multiple Jihādī groups in one region. If this is not legitimate, as many of these groups believed, then what is the legitimacy of their multiplicity in neighboring countries whose borders were originally established by enemies? Some Jihādīs went to the extreme of claiming the right to eliminate any new attempt to establish a Jihādī group in a country where a Jihādī group already existed, in order to preserve the unity of the Jihād ranks.

Similarly, the issue of the pledge of allegiance in organizations; its details regarding establishment, dissolution, and its consequences in terms of rights and duties. Some went to the extent of considering it merely a covenant or akin to an oath, from whose obligations the giver could free himself whenever he wished, at most requiring him to fast for three days like one who cannot fulfill a vow. Others, however, maintained that the pledge to an organization is like the pledge to the supreme Imām, from which an individual cannot withdraw unless he sees clear, manifest disbelief for which he has proof from Allāh.

Also, the issue of consultation (Shūrā) and leadership (Imārah) within the organization: the rights of the leader (Amīr), the method of his appointment, the duration of his term, methods of his removal, and his rights and duties. Likewise, the subject of consultation, the method of decision-making in the organization, its relationship to the leader's صلاحيات (authorities), and the institutional structures within the Jihādī group and methods of managing them, especially under conditions of security pursuits.

Furthermore, the problem of the legitimate political and intellectual methodologies chosen by the organization: with the absence of cadres capable of developing them in most countries, and the importation of such ideas from neighboring organizations.

In addition to a problem branching from methodologies, which is the problem of educational curricula and the mechanisms for their application to new members, and the difficulties created by the security situation and secrecy for implementing any training and educational programs.

And so forth. Due to security conditions, pursuits, a scarcity of cadres capable of theorizing, and an almost complete absence of scholars or even competent students of Sharīʿah knowledge, Jihādī organizations were unable to resolve these intellectual problems and crises. Consequently, these intellectual crises often reflected themselves in the form of organizational crises, adding further suffocation to the series of crises faced by Jihādīs in the last decade of the twentieth century.

5. Political Crises and Public Relations Problems

Amidst the Islāmic Awakening, as well as with secular political opposition circles, most segments of the Islāmic Awakening adopted a stance towards the Jihādīs' struggle with the ruling apostate authorities that ranged from neutrality and a spectator's position to negativity, hostility towards Jihādīs, and support for the positions of tyrannical rulers, motivated by the desire to preserve their partisan or personal interests.

As a result of the revolutionary mentality of most Jihādīs and the nature of emotional reactions to the siege, the Jihādīs' responses to the circles of the Awakening, its leaders, and senior Muslim scholars were often characterized by tension and harshness. These reactions were, in most cases, justified in the face of Awakening leaders and scholars who applauded the ruling disbelief, praised it, justified occupation and Crusader invasions under the pretext of necessity and seeking assistance, and permitted normalization with the Jews, or who adopted a stance of apathy, spectatorship, and indifference.

However, the reality, regardless of its justification or lack thereof, was the isolation of Jihādīs within the Awakening circles. Only some Jihādī leaders, in rare cases, were able to maintain political and normal relations with Awakening circles. Jihādī literature in that dark decade of crises (1990-2000) entered into media battles and altercations with various Awakening circles, their parties, and their prominent figures.

The same, and even more severe, can be said about the crisis in relations between Jihādīs and secular nationalist, pan-Arabist, and leftist opposition circles in the Arab-Islāmic world. The Jihādīs' relationship with them was based on the principle of excommunication and enmity, as was the case with most Islāmic Awakening circles towards the secular milieu, especially in the Arab world. Although most of these secular sectors, their parties, and their figures had suffered and continue to suffer from government repression, and found themselves in the same trench of persecution as Islāmists and Jihādīs, and it might have been possible for Jihādīs to win over some moderate figures from among them towards the religious phenomenon, or even draw them into a position of neutrality, tension on one side, suspicion on the other, mistrust and historical enmity on yet another, in addition to the lack of qualified political cadres in the Jihādī current's leadership to establish such a dialogue, and the Jihādīs' communication principle being based on absolute disassociation without considering the margins of the art of the possible, but rather on an uncompromisingly rigid approach in a market crowded with groups, personalities, programs, and methodologies.

All this resulted in amassing the largest possible number of enemies against the Jihādī phenomenon. This exacerbated the crises and the siege, culminating, along with all the aforementioned crises, in a comprehensive crisis, the title and result of which is the following crisis:

The Crisis of Failure to Achieve the Goal and the Proven Futility of the Means:

The goal of all Jihādī organizations that operated from the 1960s until the end of the twentieth century was, in short: to overthrow the existing apostate governments in their countries and establish an Islāmic system, implementing Sharīʿah on its ruins.

Their means to achieve this was armed action against these governments through organizations that were regional in scope, clandestine in method, and hierarchical in structure.

In short, half a century of attempts, especially after the exacerbation of the crises of the past decade, led Jihādīs to fail in achieving these goals and proved the futility of these means for many reasons. Most of these reasons were external, resulting from the onslaught of global forces of disbelief and communal apostasy against them, and from the stance of most of the Ummah's scholars, who either confronted them, as did the front of the Sultan's scholars, or adopted a spectator's position, uninvolved in the conflict. It was also due to the general reluctance of Muslim peoples to fulfill their duty in confronting all waves of injustice and darkness that overwhelmed the reality of Muslims, in addition to the internal problems and crises that afflicted Jihādī experiments.

Thus, all experiments failed, as we saw in the historical review of the most important attempts. All of them failed to achieve that goal. The last of these failures was the Algerian experience, which tragically concluded these experiments. The means, namely (regional, clandestine, hierarchical organizations), also proved their futility and inability to achieve that goal, especially after the emergence of the New World Order, which rendered the methods of these means obsolete and relics of the past in the age of globalization, which globalized the confrontation and relegated those methods, attempts, goals, and tactics to the archives of history.

A Breathing Space in the Realm of the Taliban and the Islāmic Emirate (1996-2001) and the Lost Opportunity:

Since early 1997, a considerable number of prominent Jihādī current cadres from various Arab countries, including organizational leaders, historical figures, students of knowledge, and those with experience, opinion, and expertise, gathered in Afghanistan under the Taliban. The atmosphere of security, comfort, relaxation, and all the elements of a suitable environment presented a historic and golden opportunity for these men to reflect on resolving those crises and to emerge with visions that would mark the beginning of a new phase of advancement. Everyone acknowledged the existence of crises and the necessity of seeking solutions. The period we spent there, approximately five years, was relatively sufficient to achieve a rebuilding process.

However, the surprise was that the "regional idea" and "organizational partisanship" re-emerged to dominate the new phase as well, through camps, guesthouses, and groups that built their conceptions on a "regional - clandestine - hierarchical" basis once again. Most organizations set the same goal that events since 1990, and at the latest since 1995, and what happened in Algeria and elsewhere, had proven impossible to achieve under the New World Order.

I am not here to detail that phase, but I will point out that this "regional - organizational partisan" mentality caused the Jihādī current to miss a golden opportunity. Advocates of the internationalist idea in confrontation, neither Sheikh Usama and al-Qaeda nor others, could persuade these segments and cadres to seize the opportunity and unite their ranks, or at least coordinate. Although Sheikh Usama was the primary candidate to persuade others, he failed to do so for several reasons, the most important of which were their regional and organizational conceptions on one hand, and al-Qaeda's lack of a clear methodology according to Jihādī standards,

as well as the lack of clarity in its institutional structure. These two factors were the most significant in squandering that opportunity. It could have been possible to undertake efforts to review methodologies, methods, goals, and means in light of understanding the new reality, taking advantage of the favorable conditions, and rallying everyone around the legitimacy of the Commander of the Faithful (Mullah Muhammad Omar) and the global symbolism of Sheikh Usama. But that did not happen, and all efforts made in that direction by some independents, of whom I was one – as I repeatedly called upon the senior figures on several occasions to persuade them, but to no avail – failed. And Allāh's command is a decreed destiny.

Then came September, putting an end to that golden opportunity, and concealing in the unseen whether a new chance would be afforded to the Jihādīs, enabling their next generation to achieve what that pioneering mujāhid predecessor generation, which played a leading role in confronting the enemies of Islām and their apostate allies, failed to achieve. However, the crises and calamities were greater than their capabilities to achieve their goals. Perhaps the coming destiny holds promise for achieving what was missed of opportunities, and for every term, there is a decree.

Tenth: Ideas Proposed Among Jihādīs to Emerge from the Crisis (1996-2001):

By the mid-1990s, the Jihādī current, with its various organizations and components, had practically reached the depths of crisis. Most of its leaders and veterans became convinced that Jihādī paths had reached a dead end, that the diverse crises had peaked, and that continuing in that manner and with its given factors seemed impossible.

Jihādī attempts had failed successively, and most of their flames were extinguished one after another. Most organizations disintegrated. The surviving leaders and cadres dispersed to various overt and covert havens and hideouts, leaving behind in

their countries large numbers of imprisoned mujāhid elements, or supporters and loyalists who had assisted them in their movements, in addition to a large number of families of martyrs, including women and children, in extremely tragic humanitarian conditions. The crises we previously mentioned in all intellectual, political, financial, and organizational fields also intensified, adding to the list of suffocating crises.

The culmination of shocks and crises was the horrific disaster that befell the Jihād experience in Algeria after intelligence agencies managed to activate the seeds of extremism and ignorance within the ranks of some Algerian mujāhidīn by planting intelligence agents to push the cause into the labyrinths of excommunication, criminality, and bloody massacres. Its dreadful and sorrowful news constituted a massive shock to Jihādīs, their supporters, and all believers in the idea of armed action.

Thus, senior Jihādīs and the remnants of their organizations began to search for solutions and ways out. I witnessed such reviews and discussions in the safe haven for Jihādīs in Afghanistan, after most of the remaining groups and important figures in the Jihādī current migrated to the Islāmic Emirate established by the Taliban.

The proposals, ideas, and attempts to emerge from the depths of the crisis among Jihādīs can be divided into three schools, each manifesting in practical attempts and a new direction of movement. They were three dynamic trends, which I have named as follows:

1. The school of surrender, laying down arms, and abandoning principles.
2. The school of steadfastness in principle and continuation of the method.
3. The school of internationalist orientation towards Jihād against the external aggressor, America and its allies.

Let us discuss each of these schools in some detail:

1. The School of Surrender to Emerge from the Crisis:

The essence of this school's idea is: Our crises as Jihādīs resulted from taking up arms, and they will not cease except by the cessation of that cause. So, the solution is to lay down arms and seek other methods of action.

In reality, the precursors of this school, whose proponents explicitly stated the content of their call in the mid-1990s, date back to the mid-1980s when Jihādī movements began to retreat and face crises and defeats. It was often proposed in each country after every practical defeat of a Jihādī attempt. The first to propose it was the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria following the Hama tragedy in 1982. At the time, they called it the "reconciliation with the regime" initiative. The Syrian Brotherhood employed numerous intermediaries to pursue ways to knock on Hafez al-Assad's doors, which practically remained closed to those calls. His son Bashar continued to keep the door closed after him.

The remnants of the Fighting Vanguard organization in Syria had taken actual steps towards surrender under the guise of reconciliation. Many of its members came forward under state offers known as the "amnesty law." This process had no political details; it was almost individual surrender and repentance operations, in which some elements from the Vanguard, then from the Brotherhood individually, participated and signed "repentance" statements, at the top of which was written: *{My Lord, for the favor You have bestowed upon me, I will never be an assistant to the criminals.}* (Qurʾān, Al-Qaṣaṣ:17)

However, the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria wanted to surrender in a "semi-honorable" formula, so they made "reconciliation" offers politically, between their group as a political opposition party and the state and regime. But Hafez al-Assad's government, following diabolical advice from some of its state-sponsored scholars, chief among them Sheikh... (Said Ramadan al-Bouti) and others, imposed a set of

impossible conditions on the Brotherhood, including a public admission of their error in taking up arms, their crimes against the state, and writing political-Sharīʿah research papers in which they would use verses and Ḥadīth to prove the error of their path! Then, they were to come under the amnesty law individually, not in a way that preserved even a modicum of dignity. The situation was not pressing enough on them in their havens in Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf, and abroad for them to accept. Their offers of reconciliation continued, and their conditions shrank until the General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, Ali Sadr al-Din al-Bayanuni, appeared on media outlets and satellite channels offering reconciliation and presenting his demands, which had shrunk to a single demand: "the right of citizenship only, under democracy and political pluralism," and return to the homeland without conditions or programs. Despite this, the regime still refused, stating it was considering a general amnesty that would include the innocent, with the necessity of conducting trials for those proven to be involved in crimes against the state, the people, and the homeland. As for most of the wanted individuals, many of whom had not participated in any action in the revolution where most participants were martyred or imprisoned, most of them returned through surrender to Syrian embassies around the world under the amnesty law. Each one wrote a report detailing his life from when he left Syria and Jihād until his return. News came of some being arrested again, and others interrogated, prevented from traveling, and obliged to report to security departments to provide required information about themselves, their relatives, and neighbors, and the weak among them were turned into informants for the security services.

Something similar occurred under what was called the "repentance project" for those pursued in Tunisia in the mid-1990s, although most of them were from Islāmic political oppositions. Zine El Abidine's government imposed humiliating conditions, which some accepted, while others rebelled against them, and Sheikh Rached Ghannouchi rejected them, writing well-argued pieces emphasizing a

strategy of steadfastness in confronting the Tunisian regime and similar tyrannical governments, at least politically.

In Algeria, in mid-1996, after dismantling armed groups, infiltrating them, and diverting their course towards excommunication, criminality, and massacres, and implicating some of their factions in them, while the regime itself carried out some massacres and attributed them to these groups, the regime offered a general amnesty through what was called the "National Reconciliation" initiative. Many jurists of the sultans in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere volunteered to support the initiative and issue fatwas for Muslims to surrender and come down from the mountains. Many factions descended and laid down their arms through individual initiatives.

However, the largest and most dangerous of these surrenderist practices and proposals from within the Jihādī current was through what became known as the "Initiative" undertaken by the Islāmic Group in Egypt. This was known as the initiative to lay down arms and renounce violence unilaterally, without requesting anything in return from the state except calling on it to release Islāmists and end the crisis. The initiative ebbed and flowed from 1996 until mid-2003, when signs of the Egyptian government's responsiveness to it appeared. During the review of the Islāmic Group's experience in Egypt, reference was made to this initiative, the most dangerous aspect of which was that senior historical leaders of the group began to provide a theoretical basis for surrender, writing numerous books and research papers condemning the methodology of armed Jihād, describing it as violence, and declaring a series of jurisprudential and intellectual violations of Jihādī thought and legitimate political thought concerning theصول (foundations) of the Jihādī current, the explanation and commentary on which would be lengthy. An indication of its deterioration is that it reached the point of considering the assassination of Anwar Sadat a historical mistake and describing him as a martyr of sedition. Thus, the

apostate tyrant became a martyr, and Jihād against his Jewish masters became sedition.

I will try, if Allāh wills, to find this series of books and research papers to study them, respond to them, and refute their contents, if Allāh helps, time permits, and life remains. For blocking these pretexts is one of the most important areas of defending the Jihādī current, regardless of our respect for the history of those who undertook them and their excuse in their necessities. However, it is an intellectual response to a proposed idea, regardless of the stature of its proponents, as they presented what they presented while they were prisoners, having moved from a smaller prison to a larger one. The opinions of one who has lost his will are not to be considered. May Allāh help them in their ordeal, accept their good deeds, and overlook their shortcomings or what they were forced into.

Then, the proposals of this school continued, and its proponents became public after September 2001 and the global anti-terrorism campaign led by America, taking the Islāmic Group's initiative and its writings as a model to be emulated in renouncing their previous commitments and retreating from the constants of Jihādī thought and the doctrinal foundations of legitimate politics, under the pressure of the formidable media machine of America and its lackeys.

Similar regressions occurred when the Saudi government arrested a group of Jihādī jurists and scholars in Saudi Arabia and forced or persuaded them to retract and call on the mujāhidīn there and the American forces on the land of the Two Holy Sanctuaries to lay down their arms. Saudi media recruited dozens of scholars and senior preachers to promote these proposals and this school.

Thus, these proposals always emerge, as I mentioned, in the wake of defeats and setbacks, where their proponents search for a solution by removing the cause of the crisis according to their perception, which is "bearing arms." It is natural, as is

always the human tendency to patch up one's actions and find excuses for one's failings and retreats, that the adherents of this methodology do not call it by its explicit name, which is "surrender" or "defeat." Instead, they search for gentler names and formulas and unleash a torrent of justifications and jurisprudence that subsequently follow to justify it. They call it at times "amnesty law," at other times "reconciliation," sometimes "national concord," sometimes "truce," sometimes "national reconciliation," and sometimes "initiative to renounce violence," and so on. The titles multiplied under claims of wisdom, rationality, and realism. The names varied, but the surrender was one and the same.

The calamity would have been minor if those people – may Allāh protect us from what the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ sought refuge from: worry and grief, incapacity and failure, cowardice and miserliness, overwhelming debt, and subjugation by men – had possessed frankness and courage and had come out to the people to say: "O our people, we exerted our utmost, we gave our all, those who abandoned us did so, and we could only achieve what our efforts allowed. Now we call for a truce or peace, or even declare surrender. We have lost the round, and Allāh will send for this religion those who will uphold its cause and grant it victory. Perhaps future generations will have better opportunities than what was presented to us." They would then dissolve their groups or organizations and withdraw from the confrontational arena.

But the calamity was greater when attractive names were given to the reality of surrender, and justifications were found for it. The catastrophe reached its peak when their writers and jurists began to theorize and issue fatwas for abandonment and surrender to enemies, unraveling their own work and that of others, which the mujāhidīn in the way of Allāh had established and affirmed with their blood over the years along the path of torment and hardship towards martyrdom and steadfastness. These demeaning efforts block the path for the upcoming youth of the Ummah, lest they follow in our footsteps, lest they try again and again, hoping to

achieve what we were not successful in achieving. This is precisely what the cunning enemy, its intelligence agencies, and its psychological and security studies centers intended. They want to kill the seeds of revolution against injustice and oppression, and the fight against disbelief and occupation, and to nip its ideas in the bud. It is their attempt to extinguish Allāh's light with their wealth, ignorant or feigning ignorance that Allāh will perfect His light, even if the disbelievers detest it.

How often I stood perplexed when I read in the accounts of the Sīrah (Prophetic biography) that Abū Jahl ibn Hishām, may Allāh curse him, when he was grievously wounded in Badr, and the noble Companion ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd mounted his chest to sever his head, Abū Jahl, in his last throes, asked him: "To whom does victory belong today?" ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd replied: "To Allāh and His Messenger, and Allāh has disgraced you." That stubborn tyrant said: "Tell Muḥammad that I have never regretted my enmity towards him, not even at this moment!" Then he perished.

I used to wonder how that disbeliever, whose banner was defeated and whose soul was taken against his will as he departed to Hell, refused anything but to display pride, steadfastness, self-esteem, and sincerity to what he was upon, even though it was misguidance.

I wish our manliness, chivalry, and dignity would aid us; our respect for the blood of our martyrs, the sufferings of our prisoners and displaced, and the tears of our widows and orphans. Nay, if only the zeal for our religion and our banner, and the truth for which we waged Jihād, would ignite in our chests, so that we could say to our enemies when we lose some rounds and are defeated in some stations and battles in this eternal, open war; to say to our enemies:

"Convey to your pharaohs and your masters, the tyrants, and their masters among the Jews and Christians: that we have not regretted our enmity towards them, not even in the most severe hours of defeat and sacrifice. And that we are confident that

Allāh's victory is coming. Its triumphant banners will be carried by those who will follow our path, and be guided by our footsteps as we were guided by the footsteps of the preceding caravan, connected by the succession of those who journeyed and strove since the Master of Messengers ﷺ led it. We are upon the truth, Allāh willing, whether we are victorious or defeated in this ideological confrontation."

How is it that we do not find such steadfastness and defiance, which a disbeliever facing Hell displayed? How can we not find it when we, Allāh willing, will be received by Paradise? And we believe that Allāh is our protector, and they have no protector.

Oh, if only the faltering understood his ﷺ glad tidings to Khabbāb, may Allāh be pleased with him, when he came asking him to pray for their victory, exhausted by the torment inflicted upon him and his brothers – may Allāh be pleased with them. So he told him about the sacrifices of those who came before and gave him glad tidings, saying: *"But you are hasty."*

2. The School of Steadfastness and Continuation on the Path of Jihād and Confrontation:

This path was adopted by most Jihādīs, from Jihādī organizations and groups, cadres, symbols, leaders, and bases of the Jihādī current, despite the path of hardship and torment. This was the stance of most of those blocs and men who sought refuge in Afghanistan during the Taliban era. Lofty ambitions and souls eager for work and contribution returned through a path of diligent preparation and movement. These individuals saw steadfastness as a Sharīʿah obligation that a Muslim could not abandon, and they viewed surrender as a disgrace and flight that they were not permitted to pursue.

However, I noticed from those steadfast individuals – may Allāh accept from them – that their steadfastness had two aspects:

1. Positive steadfastness.
2. Negative steadfastness.

As for positive steadfastness: It is steadfastness on principles, values, the banner, and the trust, for all the Sharīʿah imperatives calling for it, and for what the imperatives of dignity, honor, defiance, and zeal for sacred things demand.

As for negative steadfastness: It is what I observed of those brothers' adherence to their previous methods of operation and their organizational frameworks with all their components and ways. Organizations continued to operate according to the concept of "regionalism, secrecy, and hierarchy," and worked towards the same previous goal, which is overthrowing apostate regimes to establish leaders who rule by Allāh's Sharīʿah in their lands, following most of the traditional methods in systematic preparation and other areas of organizational work.

It seemed as if all the massive changes brought about by the launch of the New World Order, counter-terrorism systems, the collapse of security margins and havens between states, and all the lessons and admonitions we mentioned earlier, had not left a significant impact on the working methods of most Jihādīs. This was despite the fact that many of those methods and ideas were either no longer suitable for the current phase or had proven ineffective.

3. The School of Internationalist Orientation Towards Jihād Against the External Aggressor: America and Its Allies:

The essence of this school's proposal, as I explained in some detail, was that battles with regimes are futile, and that America and its allies from the Crusader and Jewish forces are the beneficiaries of these wars of attrition, despite the truth in them. The solution lies in waging Jihād against the head of the snake, America, whose demise would lead to the collapse of all these regimes, and the beginning of the rectification of conditions and their movement towards what is right, after which it would be

easy to work on establishing Islāmic rule after cleansing the Arab and Islāmic region from its tyranny and the tyranny of its followers.

Sheikh Usāmah bin Lāden and the al-Qāʿidah organization represented the most prominent Jihādīs who saw the need to move in this direction since 1996. This was inaugurated by issuing a declaration of Jihād against America, as happened in their experience, which I summarized in the previous chapter. I believe that this proposal, in general, regardless of the performance details of those who worked for it, is a correct and sound proposal that is very much in line with the scale of changes the world has witnessed with America's seizure of leadership of the New World Order and its unilateral rule of the world as a sole pole and an overbearing superpower.

A Look at Jihādī Attempts to Overcome the Crisis of the Jihādī Current Towards the End of the Twentieth Century:

Through evaluating the proposed ideas and comparing them with the summary of ideas I had formed, I reached the following conclusion regarding the three aforementioned schools:

First: The proposals of the school of "surrender," laying down arms, and abandoning the path of Jihād, represent a school whose ideas are invalid according to Sharīʿah and whose outcome is futile in reality, as indicated by the texts of the Sharīʿah and what the experiences of the past in our lands and in the experiences of all nations teach us.
What we did not achieve through Jihād and the sword, we will not achieve through defeat and surrender, neither at the level of objectives nor even at the level of personal salvation.

Second: The school of steadfastness on the Jihādīs' path, according to their old method, will only lead to what it led to in the past: repeated failure. It failed previously even though our working conditions and the realities of our situation

before the establishment of the New World Order were better and more favorable. Nevertheless, those methods, ways of thinking, and means of action did not achieve the objectives. So what now, when the surrounding reality has changed and global conditions have emerged through which it is impossible to work with those methods in any way? The five years (1996-2001) proved the futility of those methods and the inability of old Jihādī organizations or new attempts by some to achieve any result or progress. They only resulted in more schisms, divisions, losses, and casualties among martyrs and prisoners, through the limited attempts they made, in addition to the exacerbation of the effects of campaigns to dry up resources, media distortion, and security pursuits in isolating these remnants and what remained of them from their countries and societies. Those who remained transformed into small groups living on memories and hopes of the past, and dreams of a future that become more fantastical day by day.

Third: The call put forth by Sheikh Usāmah, upon which al-Qāʿidah operated, to engage in battle with America, represents a gateway to correcting the course of Jihād, mobilizing the Ummah, and moving from there to subsequent priorities in resolving the problems of the Muslim reality. It is the soundest and most realistic path, and appropriate for the new circumstances of the New World Order.

I saw in it hope and an opportunity for renewal and a strong launch to correct the course of Jihād and the Jihādī current, if it succeeded in bringing about a serious orientation towards the necessary methodological grounding for it, and development in management and method appropriate for the phase. I hoped they would be guided to the appropriate and correct means to achieve that, just as they were guided to the correct identification of the goal and method. This major renewal and shift in goal and method of operation required great efforts in developing the methodology and fundamentals of thinking, just as it needed significant development in the methods of putting those ideas into practice on the ground.

However, events were too swift to allow for that to be achieved, which is something that requires more time.

Based on that reality, I became convinced of the necessity of launching new theories of action to fill part of the large vacuum necessitated by that shift in confrontation.

After long reflection and benefiting from the accumulated sequence and development of these ideas within me over ten years, as I explained in the introduction, I proposed in the Afghan arena what I considered the beginning of a new school in attempts to reform the course of the Jihādī current and work to bring it out of the crisis, which I named:
The Call of the Brigades of Global Islāmic Resistance (Sarāyā al-Muqāwamah al-Islāmiyyah al-ʿĀlamiyyah), whose theories are based on three foundations: First – Steadfastness... Second – Correction... Third – Development.

I worked on discussing these ideas with those veterans and cadres of the Jihādī current whom I was able to study with during the period (1998-1999). Then I became convinced of the necessity of establishing a new Jihādī nucleus to crystallize the ideas of this call and put them into practice. This began at the start of the year 2000.

Then came the events of September, which shuffled all the cards, and their repercussions scattered all efforts, overturned all situations, and placed all Jihādīs, indeed all Islāmists, indeed all Muslims, indeed the whole world, before a new stage with new realities that divided the entire world into two camps, as defined by the President of America when he launched what he frankly called the "New Crusades." He said, in short: "Whoever is not with America in its war is against it... and there is no place for neutrality."

Then, in the aftermath of the September events, most of the remaining cadres of the past generation of the Jihādī current were killed or captured, so the entities vanished and disintegrated, and those who survived were scattered and dispersed.

Then America invaded Iraq, laid out plans to occupy the Middle East and control the Islāmic world, and created new situations that made the only practically possible Jihādī school the Jihād against the aggressor America and its allies, as a sole and compulsory option. This convinced me that what I had concluded in 1991, regarding the necessity of a shift in the Jihādī current towards globalization and confining Jihād to a comprehensive project of resistance against America and its aides, and what occurred to me and others like me who saw this as the correct perception, was what the new reality imposed as the only possible and compulsory option.

Foundations of the Resistance Call and the Mechanism for Deriving Its Theories

After the first part, whose final chapters we are now approaching, has covered all the historical, political, intellectual, and methodological premises that justify and clarify the logic of the subsequent ideas which I will detail in the second part of this book, if Allāh wills. This is the essence of the theories of Global Islāmic Resistance, its call, and its method, as I believe it to be the effective means of confrontation in this phase, if Allāh wills. In the following paragraph, I will outline the principles from which the theories of action of Global Islāmic Resistance, as I conceive them, have emerged, if Allāh wills, and Allāh is the granter of success.

The Three Foundations of the Call and Theories of Global Islāmic Resistance

Steadfastness, Correction, and Development:

All theories of the Resistance call emanate from three foundations, the summary of which is as follows:

First: Steadfastness:

Steadfastness on the path of Jihād as the sole solution to the problems of Muslims, Arabs and non-Arabs, in our lands and everywhere. I have previously, in the second chapter of this book, mentioned the Sharīʿah-based, logical, and realistic justifications proving that armed Jihād is the solution. I reiterate here, in response to those "regressing Jihādīs" and other Islāmists who claim that laying down arms and returning to methods they falsely call "legitimate" or "legal," that this is a conception rejected by Sharīʿah, and flawed in reason and logic. After all Sharīʿah-based evidence supported by reality has proven that Jihād, repelling this aggressor, and fighting the invading campaigns and their apostate and hypocritical aides is an individual obligation (farḍ ʿayn) upon every Muslim, second in obligation only to the Tawhīd of Allāh, and more obligatory than all other duties of Islām after faith, it is no longer permissible for any Muslim to make excuses and search for other solutions when Allāh Almighty says: *{It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allāh and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair.}* (Qurʾān, Al-Aḥzāb:36).

Since the obligation has been determined, steadfastness in performing it is a Sharīʿah obligation not subject to debate, give and take, according to the ideas of minds and the whims of souls.

Even rationally and logically, how can one justify seeing the solution in laying down arms when America has deployed more than one and a half million American soldiers in what it calls the "Central Command Area of Operations," extending from the Islāmic republics in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Afghanistan in the east, to the Atlantic coasts in Morocco in the west, across nearly twenty-five countries encompassing the entire Arab world and most of the Islāmic world? And it has attacked us with all weapons of war technology, openly declaring the banner of the Crusade and its objectives, those objectives which include occupying land,

plundering wealth, dividing states, changing regimes, and imposing changes in cultural, intellectual, religious, and historical curricula! They want the destruction of our lands, the plunder of our wealth, the shedding of our blood, and the distortion of the components of our religious, national, and civilizational identity! How, then, can it be justified that steadfastness in the principle of Jihād and bearing arms is not the requirement of religion and reason? This is a truth that requires pointing out and emphasizing, not proof and demonstration, because it is necessarily known from the religion and established by reason with the consensus of all rational people and most of the insane.

How can Jihād not be the solution and steadfastness not be the requirement of religion, when the apostate, client regimes have rushed to place all their military, security, political, economic, media, and every other capability at the service of the invaders, for one sole purpose: the invader's satisfaction with them and the continuation of those pharaohs and their sons who are lining up on the thrones of crown princes in monarchies and republics alike?

How not, when the political oppositions to these regimes have aligned themselves, wanting to overthrow them, not for the requirements of religion, honor, and Arab and Islāmic dignity, but to offer the invading occupier greater services than those provided by the existing apostate client regimes? If we wanted to elaborate on proving the components of steadfastness and what Sharīʿah and reason impose, it would require hundreds of pages. But a mere indication and the preceding Sharīʿah-based and realistic evidence suffice.

So, steadfastness on the principle of Jihād, fighting, and raising arms against the enemy and its aides and agents among the disbelievers, apostates, and hypocrites, is the first foundation of the call for Global Islāmic Resistance to which we advocate.

Second: Correction:

One of the fundamental beliefs of us, the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah, is that every human being's words can be accepted or rejected, except for the occupant of the noble grave ﷺ. Thus, all actions and sayings of humans, including the best of Muslims after the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, are subject to this criterion. There are constants in our Jihādī methodology that are constants from the foundations of our religion and belief. They are not subject to alteration or change, and neither we nor anyone else has the right to tamper with them. These are constants based on the foundations of our beliefs as Muslims, and the foundations of our Jihādī belief as Jihādīs, as established in our methodology, such as the rulings of the Tawhīd of Governance, and the foundations of the doctrines of loyalty and disavowal, and so on.

However, everything else, including ideas, perceptions, and opinions proposed within the Jihādī current, ijtihād-based rulings and the concepts derived from them, and all methods of action that have been tried, such as means of movement, programs, and strategies, which succeeded at times and failed at others – all this heritage of concepts and experiences must now be subjected to evaluation and review, after the evidence of failure has accumulated and we have been pushed to the depths of crisis, indeed, crises.

Repeating methods and adopting concepts that, through review, have been shown to be causes of calamities, setbacks, and failure – either because they were erroneous or because they were suitable for their time but are no longer suitable due to changes in time, place, people, their natures, the laws of their movement, and the level of development of their lives – must be corrected, modified, or abolished, according to what Sharīʿah-based or logical rational proof dictates.

Paths are like straight lines between two points; repeatedly treading them can only lead to the same outcomes and stations. Repeated premises, in their entirety, can only lead to the same results. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, has commanded us to

engage in self-accountability and review after every calamity. He, the Exalted, said: *{Or why [is it that] when a [single] disaster struck you [at Uḥud], although you had struck [the enemy in Badr] with one twice as great, you said, "From where is this?" Say, "It is from yourselves."}* (Qurʾān, Āl ʿImrān:165).
So He referred us back to ourselves to reflect on our mistakes and our path. This applies to every path and course, individual or collective. "From yourselves"!

And in the Sunnah, as narrated from him ﷺ: *"The wise person is one who holds himself accountable and works for what is after death, and the incapable person is one who lets his soul follow its desires and pins his hopes on Allāh."*
The wise, intelligent, discerning, rational person is one who begins by attributing the causes of defects, failure, and error to himself. So he "holds himself accountable" and reflects on the consequence and outcome, hastening towards what is after death with goodness that pleases Allāh. And Allāh does not accept from a servant except what is purely for His sake and is correct – sincerity and adherence to the Book and Sunnah, respect for Allāh's universal laws on this earth, and preparation according to ability. This is the methodology of the wise, rational person.

As for the incapable person, he is one who lets his soul follow its desires. Among the greatest incentives for desire is following the familiar, imitating elders, treading the path to which souls have become accustomed, and not compelling them to change what is familiar and beloved. After this incapacity, he pins his hopes on Allāh – hopes of victories and successes, but honey is not reaped from thorns. Incapacity yields nothing but failure.

Thus, we adopted the principle of correction as a second foundation after steadfastness, as a starting point for the call of the upcoming Global Islāmic Resistance, by Allāh's permission, to confront this aggression and coming invasion, and to resist and overthrow this ruling tyranny and disbelief.

Through the principle of correction, and as the first link in the chain of its course, comes the next chapter as an initial contribution and a proposal for dialogue and discussion, which is the Seventh Chapter:
[The Harvest of the Jihādī Current in Forty Years (1963-2003): Achievements to be Invested, Mistakes to be Corrected, and Methods to be Developed].

Third: Development:

One of the miracles of our true religion, and because its Prophet ﷺ is the Seal of the Prophets, and because his Sharīʿah is the final Sharīʿah, the rules of its rulings came in two types:

- Fixed and detailed: No room for change, alteration, or development.
- General and summarized: Presented in broad outlines and general rules, within whose framework ijtihād, development, and change are permissible according to the changing realities of time, place, persons, and circumstances.

For example, the rulings of acts of worship and their details are fixed and have no relation to changes in time, place, or persons. Similarly, the rulings of inheritance do not change; a father is a father, a mother is a mother, and likewise brothers and sons, and relationships do not change with the change of times. Therefore, the rulings of obligatory shares and inheritance were detailed and fixed. Likewise, the rulings of purity were detailed; the pure is pure, the impure is impure, ritual impurity is ritual impurity, and the menstruation of women at the end of time is like the menstruation of women at its beginning, and the rulings do not change, and so on with other constants. Therefore, the rulings concerning these matters came detailed, specific, complete, and perfect. However, many of the rulings of public relations, and what is related to human movement and activity whose circumstances change, have had their rulings regulated by broad outlines, and among these are the rulings of Sharīʿah-based politics.

Rulings of Sharīʿah-based Politics:

These are rulings built on Sharīʿah and policy. Sharīʿah is fixed, its permissible is permissible, and its forbidden is forbidden. Policy, however, is transformative and changeable because it is based on human movement. As their conditions change, rulings and stances towards them change. Issues of movement, administration, organization, management, governance of people, and methods of peace and war are all subject to ijtihād. For hundreds of years, Islāmic scholars have filled the Islāmic library with precious productions and ijtihād, and the door remains open for the competent.

Jihād against enemies is a religion and a fixed obligation. However, its modality, methods, tools, system, and so forth, are all variables in which the Sharīʿah has left the door open for human creativity and contribution according to what Allāh opens for His servants.

Tampering with the fixity of the fixed only leads to disasters, the least of which is failure and defeat, and the worst of which is ruin before Allāh Almighty as a recompense for playing with the definitive rulings of His religion, Blessed and Exalted is He.

Fixing the changeable by disabling Allāh Almighty's universal laws in His creation, constricting His servants, and reducing the horizons that Allāh, Glorified is He, has expanded for His servants.

For example, when Allāh, Glorified and Exalted, said:
{O you who have believed, fight those adjacent to you of the disbelievers and let them find in you harshness. And know that Allāh is with the righteous.} (Qurʾān, At-Tawbah:123).
The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ acted with utmost dynamism and breadth. He fought nearby enemies and bypassed some of them for distant ones. Thus, it appeared that

"those adjacent to you" does not necessarily mean the closest in distance as a Sharīʿah obligation, but rather includes proximity in time and proximity of harm and injury. This is what the jurists understood, and Imām al-Shāfiʿī summarized it in *Al-Umm* (4/177) saying:
"If the enemy's condition differs, with some being more harmful or more feared than others, the Imām should begin with the more feared and more harmful enemy, and there is no harm in doing so, even if their territory is farther, if Allāh Almighty wills, so that one does not fear for those he begins with what he does not fear from others, for example. This is like a necessity, because what is permissible in necessity is not permissible otherwise. The Prophet ﷺ was informed that al-Ḥārith ibn Abī Ḍirār was gathering against him, so the Prophet ﷺ raided him, though there was an enemy closer to him. And he was informed that Khālid ibn Abī Sufyān ibn Shuḥ was gathering against him, so he sent Ibn Unays who killed him, though there was an enemy closer."

To freeze it on the concept of distance and direct succession is to fix a variable, which only leads to hardship and distress. This is what some bound themselves to, saying we will not fight America and its allies until we fight the nearest enemy, namely the rulers, as an obligation and by text. The matter was not so.

Say even more than that about tools, methods, weapons, means, and ways of confrontation, and so on. They are not a fixed religion, but rather changeable and evolving means.

Hence, the third foundation of the call for Global Islāmic Resistance that we proposed is development – developing the idea of Jihād, its methods, and its means. This starting point is what generated the theories of resistance in all aspects of movement, which include:
a- The Idea.

b- The Means.

c- The Method.

In detail, it included developed theories for action in the eight areas upon which work and movement are based:

1. Methodology and combat doctrine.
2. Politics and its horizons.
3. Education, its domains, and its methods.
4. Military confrontation and its methods.
5. Organization, movement, and building Jihādī entities.
6. Training, preparation, and their appropriate methods.
7. Financing Jihād and ways to secure it.
8. Media, incitement, its tools, and its methods.

These are the theories that we will detail in the second part of this book, if Allāh wills.

These theories were born through a mechanism of generating what we believe to be correct from the lessons and experiences of the past, and through the lesson of what has been proven to us to be erroneous, or the unsuitability of continuing to work with it.

In any case, as long as we have established the principle of correction and development for previous experiences, methods of work and movement, concepts, methodologies, and ijtihād-based principles, the principle remains applicable even to the ideas and methods of work and administration that we propose. We assume their suitability for the current and upcoming phase in the developmental scope. These are ideas in the realm of "opinion, war, and stratagem," also subject to correction and amendment.

Those treading the path of resistance and Jihād against Allāh's enemies must review their actions at every stage, considering the circumstances of each country or place, the time and history of the work, the individuals and peoples involved and those around them, and the changing conditions of those around them from the circles of enemies, supporters of enemies, mujāhidīn, supporters of Jihād, and the working mujāhidīn. All these are variables that necessitate dynamism of movement and breadth of ijtihād and development.

Thus, as we embrace this spirit and through the lessons of our past experiences, I hope that hearts will be open and understandings receptive to dialogue. I draw attention to the fact that these proposals represent a critical study from within the Jihādī ranks. Praise be to Allāh, for I am a son of this path, one of its soldiers, and one of its workers, and I hope to be one of its martyrs in the way of Allāh, if Allāh wills.

This critical attempt has carried the compassion of a concerned person dealing with ailments, along with the seriousness of a researcher committed to fairness, objectivity, and practicality. I hope I have succeeded in what I intended of goodness. Whatever good is in it is from Allāh Almighty, and whatever shortcoming is from my deficient self, and perfection belongs to Allāh.

I have been keen on a methodology of general evaluation and have avoided, as much as possible, giving direct, embarrassing examples, so that this book may unite the largest possible number of hearts and not embarrass anyone, especially the brothers of Jihād and companions in arms and on the long path. May Allāh have mercy on those who have passed, make firm those who remain, help us to inflict harm on His enemies, and unite us and them in goodness.

I believe these proposals will find receptive and compassionate hearts that will forgive slips, take advice, and overlook what they consider unintentional offense. I hope the book carries nothing of that.

I also believe it will encounter narrow minds that will react with tension, either due to rejecting the principle of criticism or due to preconceived notions about the author. May Allāh forgive them in advance, and who is more deserving of forgiveness and pardon than the mujāhidīn brothers in the way of Allāh?

I ask Allāh Almighty for help in overcoming these difficult obstacles in such research, and I ask Him for guidance to what pleases Him, to make it provisions for the mujāhidīn in His way, and to write for us the like of the rewards of those who benefit from any of these counsels and proceed to wage Jihād against Allāh's enemies, without diminishing their rewards in any way.

The Harvest of the Jihādī Current in Forty Years (1963-2003 CE)

Allāh Almighty said:
*{Our Lord, indeed we have heard a caller calling to faith, [saying], 'Believe in your Lord,' and we have believed. Our Lord, so forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds and cause us to die with the righteous. * Our Lord, and grant us what You promised us through Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, You do not fail in [Your] promise." * And their Lord responded to them, "Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another. So those who emigrated or were evicted from their homes or were harmed in My cause or fought or were killed - I will surely remove from them their misdeeds, and I will surely admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow as reward from Allāh, and Allāh has with Him the best reward."}* (Qurʾān, Āl ʿImrān: 193-195)

Abū Dāwūd and al-Tirmidhī narrated from the ḥadīth of Abū Thaʿlaba al-Khushanī, may Allāh be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said concerning this

verse: *{O you who have believed, upon you is [responsibility for] yourselves. Those who have gone astray will not harm you when you have been guided.}* (Qurʾān, Al-Māʾidah:105).
The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ then said:
"Nay, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. Until you see avarice obeyed, desires followed, this world preferred, and every person with an opinion admiring his own opinion... then take care of your own self and leave the affairs of the common folk. For indeed, behind you are 'days of patience.' Patience in them will be like holding onto hot coals. The one who acts [righteously] in them will have the reward of fifty." I said: "O Messenger of Allāh, the reward of fifty of them?" He said: "The reward of fifty of you."

The Principle of Review and Evaluation and Obstacles to its Realization

Undoubtedly, this principle is from the methodology of the Qurʾān, the proposals of the Sunnah, and the fundamentals of the religion. It is also a consistent path for the righteous and an approved method among all rational people of every creed and religion. The Noble Qurʾān has alerted believers, collectively and individually, in more than one verse, to follow this methodology, especially after crises and indications from reality of the existence of errors and deviations that led to outcomes of affliction, calamities, or punishments. So He referred them back to review themselves. Allāh Almighty said, addressing the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in an explicit manner:
{Or why [is it that] when a [single] disaster struck you [at Uḥud], although you had struck [the enemy in Badr] with one twice as great, you said, "From where is this?" Say, "It is from yourselves." Indeed, Allāh is over all things competent.} (Qurʾān, Āl ʿImrān:165).
{And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember Allāh and seek forgiveness for their sins - and who can

forgive sins except Allāh? - and do not persist in what they have done while they know.} (Qurʾān, Āl ʿImrān:135).
*{I swear by the Day of Resurrection * And I swear by the self-reproaching soul.}* (Qurʾān, Al-Qiyāmah:1-2).
{Indeed, those who fear Allāh - when an impulse touches them from Satan, they remember [Him] and at once they have insight.} (Qurʾān, Al-Aʿrāf:201).
*{But when they saw it, they said, "Indeed, we are lost; * Nay, we are deprived." * The most moderate of them said, "Did I not tell you, 'If only you would exalt [Allāh]?'"}* (Qurʾān, Al-Qalam:26-28).
{Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humbly supplicate? But their hearts became hardened, and Satan made attractive to them that which they were doing.} (Qurʾān, Al-Anʿām:43). And the verses are many in this context. And from the noble Sunnah:
"The wise person is one who holds himself accountable and works for what is after death, and the incapable person is one who lets his soul follow its desires and pins his hopes on Allāh."
And ʿUmar, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: "Hold yourselves accountable before you are held accountable, and weigh your deeds before they are weighed for you."

Today, we see this principle adopted by all states, governments, political parties, economic companies, and other various institutions. All these institutions, after each phase or interim plan, evaluate their work, rates of progress and decline, conduct profit and loss calculations, and study performance levels in past stages. They often do this for development and improvement periodically and naturally, even without experiencing crises or losses. As for when such things occur, alarm bells ring to initiate an investigation into their causes. Programs are changed, administrations are altered, areas of defect and negligence are identified, and those responsible are held accountable; they resign, are dismissed, or even prosecuted if their negligence

harms others. Indeed, extremism leads some to suicide as an expression of a sense of responsibility or to escape its consequences before circles that do not forgive negligence and its repercussions on the collective. One of the most important reasons that drive rational people to processes of accountability and evaluation of past stages is the change in circumstances surrounding a work program, in a way that warns of the unsuitability of programs and plans developed for previous conditions whose givens have changed, or in the event of calamities and surprises that necessitate what is called in management science crisis cells or crisis management. Space here is too short to provide numerous examples from the experiences of Muslims and others, which are evidences known to everyone who lives in their era, interacts with it, and is aware of what is happening around them, especially among the educated, and even among common people in today's world.

The Awakening, Jihādīs, and the Principle of Review and Evaluation:

If we return to the reality of the Islāmic Awakening in general, with its various schools, and to the Jihādī current in particular, we find them to be among the furthest people from this methodology. I began my journey in the Muslim Brotherhood, lived in this Awakening and especially in its Jihādī current, interacted with many of its segments, and became acquainted with many circles of the Awakening, particularly due to my frequent travels and my work in the field of thought, writing, and media. I saw, unfortunately, how the greatest disasters, setbacks, and mistakes, especially those that led to tragedies on many levels, were justified and their files closed with four cold words: "Allāh has decreed, and what He willed, He did." Thus, this sacred sentence, indicative of one of the pillars of faith, is used in the worst way to utter a word of truth intended for falsehood and to justify incapacity, failure, and backwardness.

I am not here either, while presenting this chapter, to give examples from the course of the Islāmic Awakening and the Jihādī current – they are many and bitter, and deserve a separate, purposeful study. However, what I want to point out and emphasize, which I have done in many writings, lectures, and discussions, especially since the end of the Afghan Jihād and the launch of the New World Order in 1990, is that my conviction was: if it was possible to bypass this Sharīʿah-based, religious, logical, and rational principle throughout the course of the Awakening, which spanned decades from 1930 until the end of the twentieth century, and throughout the course of the Jihādī Awakening for half of those decades as well – which is not a short period – then it is unacceptable to bypass it now that the New World Order has been established, changing the balances of politics and reality, and a new reality has begun in the world. But unfortunately, very few circles of the Awakening and the Jihādī current undertook such necessary reviews.

Then came the opportunity of the second phase in Afghanistan, as I indicated. There were signs of such reviews, but only the initial stages were completed, which were the acknowledgment of the existence of crises and defects, and the acknowledgment of the need for reform and changes. But destiny was swifter in September 2001. The principle still stands after a new phase of the New World Order began, the phase called the "post-September world," where the "American Century" was launched, as American extremists and their allies among the Jews and Crusaders in Europe and the world wanted.

The Awakening, the Jihādī Current, and the Urgent Need for Evaluation and Reform:

There is a very pressing need today for the concerned figures among the sheikhs and leaders of the Islāmic Awakening, especially those working in its intellectual core – writers, thinkers, and scholars – to undertake these reviews, study the new

situations, analyze the causes of external and internal crises and calamities, and devise effective solutions for them according to what Allāh opens for them.

In this context, I place this chapter of my book as a contribution from the heart of the Jihādī current, to evaluate this reality and its crises, in search of a solution. I hope that Allāh will accept it with His pleasure, guide me in it to sincerity, correctness, and acceptance, and store it for me as a treasure and reward, and overlook my shortcomings and slips.

I believe it is clearer than to require proof today that the world has changed and everything has altered after September and the launch of American campaigns. I think that most of the solutions and methods proposed in the Islāmic and Jihādī Awakening are no longer realistic or viable, although large segments of adherents to stagnation and backwardness unfortunately still operate with them, until Allāh decrees a matter that was destined to be.

Obstacles to the Methodology of Evaluation, Review, Reform, and Development:

This is an ancient problem, as old as human existence on this earth. Since deviation began, conditions became corrupt, and messengers and prophets were sent as bearers of glad tidings and warners to reform what people had corrupted. They called them to the clear, explicit call of truth and success, to which reason attests and to which innate disposition (fiṭrah) inclines, by saying: *{Worship Allāh; you have no deity other than Him.}*
They found the largest segment of humankind, led by the elite, their aides, and soothsayers whom their tyrants had made light of, answering them: *"Indeed, we found our fathers upon a religion, and we are, in their footsteps, guided."* The evidences in the calls of the prophets are very numerous regarding this defect

inherent in the nature of most human souls that are prone to evil, except for those upon whom my Lord has mercy.

The first dilemma, and the greatest obstacle, is the insistence of souls on remaining with what they are accustomed to, clinging to reality and the heritage of the past, and rejecting change and development, especially when it concerns an inherited belief or a methodology of action and behavior.

The second obstacle is the sanctification of men and imitation of them in matters of religion and worldly affairs, and fanaticism for their ideas, paths, and methods, and the sanctification of structures and institutions, whether they be a tribe, a people, or an organization, at the expense of truth. How many such examples have I witnessed in the course of the Islāmic Awakening, and even the Jihādī one, and how many reformers in the call have complained about it. The scholar and martyr Sayyid Qutb protested against this phenomenon and argued against it with words that should be written in gold: "The exoneration of individuals does not equate to the distortion of the methodology."

Sheikh Marwan Hadid, the Sheikh of Jihād and its founder in Syria, cried out to the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, who refused to wage Jihād against the Ba'athists and Nusayris, saying to them: "You have made the interest of the organization an idol worshipped besides Allāh." Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, may Allāh have mercy on him, often repeated this in the face of the Muslim Brotherhood leadership who stood as an obstacle to the youth's orientation towards Jihād in Afghanistan.

The third obstacle is the resistance of those who benefit from the existing conditions to the principle of change, reform, and review, because it will hold them accountable for the results of their actions and change situations, which will at least take away their gains and positions. So they exploit the previous two obstacles: people's love

for sanctifying heritage and its symbols, and the souls' familiarity with their current state and what they grew up and grew old with. They mobilize them to defend their positions, which ensure the continuation of failure and disasters, until the ship sinks with everyone, and sorrow engulfs all, except the captain clinging to the helm, turning its wheel in the uppermost cabin, hoping the command deck will be saved, unconcerned with most of the ship submerged by water, along with its crew and cargo.

Applying the Principle of Evaluation and Review to the Reality of the Jihādī Current from 1960 to the Events of September 2001:

With all objectivity, seriousness, and brevity, I say: if we were to set aside those obstacles, especially since we, as Jihādīs, have reached the depths of crisis and disaster after September, and with complete submission to Allāh's decree and contentment with His destiny, good and bad; then if we turned to analyze our reality and the reasons for what happened to us, while believing that we carry the essence of the call to truth and its pure banner, and hundreds of our leaders, and thousands of our cadres and members of this blessed Jihādī current have offered their efforts with all sincerity and sacrifice – then why was the outcome like this? And what is our share of His تعالى saying: *{Or why [is it that] when a [single] disaster struck you [at Uḥud], although you had struck [the enemy in Badr] with one twice as great, you said, "From where is this?"} "Say, 'It is from yourselves.'"* (Qurʾān, Āl ʿImrān:165).

And to what extent is it logical and correct that we do not bear responsibility for these results? Can we, truthfully and rightly, attribute them to external factors, and repeat with relief: "Allāh has decreed, and what He willed, He did"?
And to what extent are we responsible for violating the universal laws (sunan) and for not taking the possible means?
This is not for the sake of identifying those responsible for that, trying them, holding

them accountable, demanding their resignation, imposing punishment on them, or demanding their suicide! Rather, it is for a positive action that preserves the status of the predecessors and the work of the workers, taking guidance from our Lord as a path of righteousness, as He commands us to be among the righteous: *{And [there is a share for] those who came after them, saying, "Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and put not in our hearts [any] resentment toward those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed You are Kind and Merciful."}* (Qurʾān, Al-Ḥashr:10).

We find in the summary of our journey over forty years what can be summarized in two words: "We won many battles, but we lost the war in all fields."
The outcome of the work of the Jihādī current and its organizations was failure to achieve objectives, the breaking of the confrontation, a huge list of losses, proof of failure in achieving objectives, and futility in means. This leads us to a big question. Must we admit defeat and surrender to reality? I answer this by addressing the philosophy of the relationship between failure and defeat, and the difference between them.
I believe that failure is not achieving the goal in establishing truth, whereas defeat is abandoning the pursuit of establishing truth as a result of failure. Consequently, victory has two levels: apparent victory, which is achieving objectives in establishing truth, and inner, essential victory, which is persistence and continuation in striving to achieve truth, and diligence in pursuing it, until those whom Allāh chooses from among those treading the path coincide with Allāh's decree, and permission for apparent victory is granted to them, by guiding them to sincerity and correctness – sincerity of intentions for Him alone, Glorified is He, correctness in methodology, and success in choosing and applying the means.
When destiny combines with victory, correctness of methodology, and success of means, complete, comprehensive victory is achieved, which is obtaining apparent victory in this world and acceptance of deeds in the Hereafter:
Allāh تعالى said: *{So We took retribution from those who committed crimes, and*

incumbent upon Us was the support of the believers.} (Qurʾān, Ar-Rūm:47).
And it is narrated in tradition: "Indeed, Allāh does not accept from a servant except what was purely for His sake and was correct." *{Those are the ones from whom We will accept the best of what they did and overlook their misdeeds, [their being] among the companions of Paradise. [That is] the promise of truth which they were promised.}* (Qurʾān, Al-Aḥqāf:16).
Thus, we now find that the people of the Islāmic Awakening, including the Jihādīs, have divided into two groups:
A victorious group, wounded but unbowed, whose determination has not broken, confronting the twenty-first century to make it the century of Islām, and it will be so, Allāh willing.
And a prostrate group, whose head has bowed, whose determination has broken, prostrating itself, crushed by the tracks of America's tanks and the boots of its soldiers, deafening its ears to the roar of its planes and missiles, from hearing the voice of Truth تعالى resounding: Allāhu Akbar... Ḥayya ʿalā al-Falāḥ (Come to success)... *{So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior}* – with an important condition: *{if you are [indeed] believers.}* But it is weak in strength, its resolve shattered! These are surrendering now; they have accepted that it is the American Century. The examples of their surrender are glaringly clear.
In the Islāmic Awakening generally, as in the Jihādī current, surrenderers have appeared. And in the large segment of the Ummah, most of them are surrenderers.
Therefore, and due to my knowledge of the methodology, structure, and path of the Jihādī current, after my faith in Allāh's promise, I say in short:
Yes, we Jihādīs have failed, but we have not been defeated. Even if in the outcome of our path, alongside the list of martyrs, prisoners, displaced, and tortured, there is a black entry where some defeated surrenderers from the Jihādīs have recorded their names, as happened with some leaders of the Islāmic Group in Egypt, and some "repentants" from Jihād in Saudi Arabia, and from the Syrian Brotherhood and

others.

But this does not change the overall result indicated by the stirrings of life in the body of the Ummah, which Allāh has distinguished with a glorious promise:

{Indeed, We will support Our messengers and those who believe during the worldly life and on the Day when the witnesses will stand.} (Qurʾān, Ghāfir:51). For that is Allāh's decree, written by Him Who said, Blessed and Exalted is He:

{Allāh has written, "I will surely overcome, I and My messengers." Indeed, Allāh is Powerful and Exalted in Might.} (Qurʾān, Al-Mujādilah:21). *{And indeed, Our soldiers will be those who overcome.}* (Qurʾān, Aṣ-Ṣāffāt:173). *{Allāh has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession [to authority] upon the earth just as He granted it to those before them and that He will surely establish for them [therein] their religion which He has preferred for them and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security, [for] they worship Me, not associating anything with Me. But whoever disbelieves after that - then those are the defiantly disobedient.}* (Qurʾān, An-Nūr:55). All of this is for a great, glorious, sacred reason, summarized by the glorious slogan:

"Allāhu Akbar... Allāhu Akbar... Lā ilāha illAllāh" (Allāh is Greater... Allāh is Greater... There is no god but Allāh). And because Allāh is Greater, and because there is no god but Allāh, let Hubal be exalted – for Allāh is Higher and More Majestic.

Reasons for the Failure of the Jihādī Current to Achieve its Objectives (1960-2000):

I believe the failure of the Jihādī current to achieve its objectives is due to three reasons; two are external to it, which I will mention briefly, and a third related to it, which I will detail in the following paragraphs. These reasons are:

1. The Ferocity of the Enemies' Attack on Jihādīs and the Glaring Imbalance of Power:

The enemies of Islām, both internal and external, have permitted themselves all means of oppression and abuse against Jihādīs, their groups, leaders, and members, and have extended this to brutalizing their families, and tormenting their fathers, mothers, relatives, women, and children. The ruling apostate regimes in the Arab and Islāmic world have borne the largest share of this effort and affliction. Then, forces of disbelief from Crusaders, Jews, and various atheists openly joined them, after supporting them and providing them with services, tools, and military, security, media, and material support. Those apostate disbelieving rulers fought, and still fight, everyone who stood against them as a mujāhid with all means of killing, torture, and liquidation: by killing, imprisonment, displacement, pursuit, violating honor, taking relatives hostage to pressure mujāhidīn, starvation, siege, and so on, as is well known.

Since the confrontations began, the balance of power between Jihādīs and these enemies appeared imbalanced, and it remains severely imbalanced in numbers, equipment, and means, especially in light of what we mentioned in the previous chapter about the prostration of most of the Islāmic Awakening and its leadership from engaging in confrontation, the corruption of the larger segment of scholars or their suppression and cowardice in the burrows of license, and their spinelessness in the pens of hypocrisy and abandonment, except for those whom Allāh has mercy on, and they are few. This is also in light of the aversion of the Ummah and the general Muslim populace from sacrifice and devotion in these fateful battles. Thus, the overwhelming military and security campaigns, some of whose means we briefly mentioned earlier, led to an imbalance of power and the inability of Jihādīs to achieve their objectives, and this was one of the external reasons.

2. The Inverted Reality of the Ummah and the State of Abandonment Surrounding Jihādī Attempts:

This inverted reality can be summarized in three aspects that collectively

contributed to the loss of Jihādīs, the vanguard of this Ummah, in all confrontations so far. This bitter reality manifests in three deadly phenomena:

a. The Corruption of the Vast Majority of Muslim Scholars:

Most Muslim scholars in this era are divided into two categories: either scholars of the sultan and jurists of misguidance, or scholars withdrawn into burrows of incapacity, excusing themselves with license, weakness, and lack of resourcefulness. The evidence for this is too dark to be pointed out and too numerous to be counted. We have previously alluded to some aspects of this phenomenon. What is worse than the scholars of this Ummah themselves confronting their mujāhidīn sons, testifying against them that they are criminal terrorists and Kharijites, and rebels corrupting the earth, and issuing fatwas that they are the dogs of Hellfire in the Hereafter, while in this world their ruling is to be killed, crucified, have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides, or be exiled from the land? They testify that their pharaonic, tyrannical rulers – who legislate besides Allāh, rule by other than what Allāh has revealed, and support Allāh's enemies with spear, tongue, and heart – are legitimate guardians, Muslim believers whose obedience is obligatory, and that they are more guided than those who believed and strove in the path?

Indeed, is there anything more calamitous and devastating than treacherous Muslim scholars bestowing legitimacy upon invading occupying forces, giving them the status of those granted security (mustaʾminīn) and protected non-Muslims (dhimmiyyīn), or even peaceful and supportive allies? These who came with their cavalry and infantry, occupying lands, plundering people, fighting Allāh and His Messenger, and spreading corruption on earth. To the extent that the hypocritical Saudi scholar Abd al-Muhsin al-Ubaykan – may Allāh silence his mouth – said that the Americans only strike those who attack them in Iraq, and that if disbelievers appoint a ruler over Muslims, they are legitimate guardians!

The black, reprehensible evidences require many books, too voluminous to be contained in multiple volumes, of the sayings, testimonies, and fatwas of

misguidance openly declared by evil scholars and Pentagon jurists today in all countries and regions of the Arab and Islāmic world.
As for the small segment of righteous scholars among us, they are the ones silent about the truth, mute devils,صحاب (companions) of excuses of humiliation, lack of supporters, and the license that a person is not burdened beyond his capacity.
Thus, scholars abandoned their duty of enjoining good, forbidding evil, and clarifying. They fluctuated between concealing the truth, altering it, changing it, and selling Allāh's religion and covenant for a paltry price.
This caused the scholars to recoil from leading the Awakening, and they refrained from leading Jihād. Consequently, the Islāmic Awakening went astray because of them, and then they began to criticize it for its straying! The Ummah exited the battle as a result. This deadly reason – the malfunctioning of the valve of صلاح (rectitude) and safety in the Ummah – was one of the most important causes for the enemy's ability to isolate the Jihādīs and for their loss of the battle.

b. The Corruption of Most Leaders of the Islāmic Awakening Schools:

The overwhelming majority of Islamic Awakening leaders refrained from entering the battle. Instead, they entered the arenas drawn for them by the enemy itself. Thus, the most prominent preachers of the Islamic Awakening became proponents of an Americanized version of Islām, advocating for democracy and moderation, and seeking to change curricula to eliminate violence and extremism. Regrettably, many leading figures of the Islamic Awakening became part of the institutions of the apostate, ruling infidel authorities—serving as ministers, legislators in parliaments, and guests at the tables of rulers on every occasion.

Consequently, since the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly after the advent of the New World Order, and especially since the post-September 11th era, most leaders of the Islamic Awakening have become key pillars in perpetuating this intellectual invasion. They have supported their allies among the apostate rulers

and their regimes, and have successfully contributed to the plan of isolating the Muslim nation from supporting the mujāhidīn against these enemies.

c. The Immersion of the Majority of Muslim Peoples in Corruption and Their Failure to Support the Mujāhidīn

The lives of ordinary Muslims today are characterized by distance from Allāh, immersion in frivolity, immorality, and disobedience, remoteness from obedience to Allāh, and most of them deserving Allāh's wrath and punishment. How, then, can one expect them to support the mujāhidīn or fulfill the obligation of Jihād against Allāh's enemies?

I have elaborated in the first chapter on the conditions and reality of Muslims today, which suffices to avoid repetition here.

In summary, the reality of most Muslims' lives is one of immorality, disobedience, cowardice, betrayal, and weakness—a love for this world and a hatred of death. This is due to the misguidance of their rulers, the corruption of their scholars, and the incompetence and deterioration of most of those described as leaders of their Islamic Awakening. How could they possibly ascend to the pinnacle of Islām to engage in Jihād in Allāh's path and support Allāh and His Messenger?

How can those who stay up late watching "Video Club" and "Star Academy" programs repel their enemies? How can an audience raised on satellite channels like Rotana and its ilk support the religion of Allāh? How can those who have forgotten Allāh, causing Him to make them forget themselves, stand by the mujāhidīn and make sacrifices?

Describing the shameful reality of Muslims would require many volumes. And describing the path to reform and success necessitates serious programs to rectify what has become corrupt in every aspect of Muslim affairs.

Most beliefs are corrupted. The majority of ideas are misguided. The behavior of the masses is deviant. Customs and traditions are imported from the disbelievers. Most earnings are from forbidden sources. Adultery and debauchery have become widespread, as have promiscuity, free mixing of genders, and women abandoning modest dress. The consumption of usury has been legalized, and devouring people's wealth unjustly is rampant. Deceit, fraud, vice, and ostentatious display by women have appeared. Competition in fields of frivolity and foolishness has become commonplace. Indulgence in luxury, triviality, and extravagance characterizes the lives of the affluent, while envy, malice, and hypocrisy mark most of the needy.

Those who pray among the people have become few. Most of those who fast in Ramaḍān break their fast at tables of amusement, staying up late engaging in sins, watching trivial quiz shows, and programs that promote disbelief in Allāh. Their latest invention is what they call "Ramaḍān tents," where crowds break their fast to the tunes of orchestras, the swaying bellies of dancers, artistic competitions, and prizes, continuing until near dawn. Then, they eat whatever delicacies they desire and fall asleep like corpses, starting their day by abandoning the Fajr prayer after filling their nights with transgressions. Only the fewest among them pay Zakāh. Despite having the means, only a rare few perform Ḥajj, and for most of them, it is for leisure, pride, or trade.

So where are the people called "Muslims" in relation to the reality of the testimony that there is no god but Allāh and the pillars of Islām? Where do they stand regarding the stations of faith in Allāh, His names and attributes, His angels, His books, and His messengers? What remains to indicate their faith in Allāh, the Last Day, and divine decree, both its good and its evil?

Let no one assume, nor any falsifier insinuate, that we believe in the disbelief (kufr) of such dissolute Muslims—not at all! This is merely a description of the conditions that have led to these outcomes. In general, they are Muslims, and Allāh knows best

the state of each one. They are but misguided, wicked, and unfortunate individuals; may Allāh rectify them or relieve us of them.

This, regrettably, is the condition of the majority of Muslims, something the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) foretold would happen in the end times. (See *Misk al-Khitām*, at the end of this book). However painful this truth may be, and however much it is denied by evil scholars and modern shaykhs—those with white turbans and European neckties, with plucked beards, advocates of an Americanized Islām, and the public enamored by the wailings of the clean-shaven, clownish scholar Amr Khaled.

Otherwise, what more do these Muslim populations need to be stirred into action?

Do they need more hunger than they already endure to act? Hunger is typically the first thing that moves any human to revolt. Yet, these people do not go out to fight against their own hunger and the hunger of their children! May Allāh be pleased with Abū Dharr, who said: *"I am amazed at a man who goes to bed hungry and does not go out with his sword against the people!"*

Or do they need more humiliation than they already suffer? They are in a state of abasement that even the natural disposition of most animals would reject; you find animals kicking, head-butting, scratching, or biting if harmed, defending themselves. Yet, these people are not moved by their humiliation!

Do they need more violation of honor than what has occurred and is occurring? Or do they need foreign invasion and occupation? Or tyranny, injustice, and oppression? Is the Muslim nation lacking any of these to be stirred into action?

It is astonishing today that demonstrations and marches by non-Muslim peoples rejecting the occupation of Muslim lands are more numerous than those in Arab and Muslim countries whose lands have been invaded by disbelievers! In Europe, they

protest in the millions, while in our lands, they number in the thousands, or often just hundreds or tens.

Indeed, one is astounded to find clashes between tens of thousands of demonstrators in Japan, Korea, and elsewhere with their own police to prevent their soldiers from occupying us. Meanwhile, these same soldiers land in the airports of our countries neighboring Iraq, Palestine, and other lands, enjoying complete peace and tranquility, sometimes even welcomed—not just by rulers, but by some of the populace! They even enjoy our prostitutes, licensed by law and constitution.

Lest anyone be surprised, an amusing news item reported that a group of officially registered Egyptian dancers (as "artists"), numbering over 5,000, demonstrated to protest the Egyptian government allowing imported dancers from Russia and Eastern European countries to work in Egypt's cabarets due to their lower wages. Most of them, of course, are prostitutes, like the demonstrators themselves.

An Egyptian minister responded to an Islamist's protest against taxing officially registered prostitutes, saying in the Egyptian dialect: "Well, she's earning, isn't she? And our law says: every earning is taxed!"

Foreign, secular, infidel human rights organizations protest France's ban on Muslim women wearing the ḥijāb, out of concern for personal freedom. Yet, the Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar in Egypt, the disgraced Tantawi, issues a fatwa stating that the ḥijāb ban is an internal French matter for a sovereign state, and interference is impermissible! He claims the ḥijāb is obligatory for Muslim women in Muslim countries but not in foreign lands! Then, Hosni Mubarak endorses this fatwa in his speech, asking Muslims in France to be objective and engage in dialogue! May Allāh not bless him nor his donkey of a shaykh.

We are today from a nation whose leading scholar, Ibn Baz, head of the Council of Senior Scholars, issued a fatwa permitting normalization with the Jews, to the extent

that Peres stood in the Knesset praising his moderation, while Knesset members, rabbis, and criminals applauded him!

The tragedies of the Intifada in Palestine have elicited nothing from the Muslim nation but a few demonstrations that were quickly suppressed and not repeated. The scene was then repeated with the occupation of Iraq! Before that, Bosnia was slaughtered before the eyes and ears of Muslims; more than 60,000 Muslim women were raped, 30,000 of whom bore illegitimate children from these rapes, children who were then taken by Christianizing institutions! Meanwhile, a debate raged on the pages of the Saudi newspaper *Al-Muslimoon* about whether a raped woman could strike her belly to abort the fetus, and the permissibility or prohibition of such an act! And Chechnya... and Kashmir... and Waziristan... and so on!

And now, satellite channels bring these events in full detail into every Muslim home. So, what more do these peoples need to be moved to action?

Can victory for the religion of Allāh be expected from such peoples today, so that Allāh Almighty might grant them victory, when He says:
{O you who have believed, if you support Allāh, He will support you and make your feet firm.} (Muhammad: 7). *{So what is [the matter] with these people that they can hardly understand any statement?}* (An-Nisāʾ: 78). *{Then do they not reflect upon the Qurʾān?}* (Muhammad: 24). *{Or are there locks upon [their] hearts?}* (Muhammad: 24). By Allāh, most hearts today have locks and chains upon them. *{No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning.}* (Al-Mutaffifin: 14). And we seek refuge in Allāh from the causes of His displeasure.

One day, I asked a leader of the Jihād group in Egypt, during the time we were united in Jihād against the Russians in Afghanistan, "Why did Jihād fail in Egypt?" He said, "My brother, you know that among the most important elements for guerrilla warfare are the terrain and the people. Our problem in Egypt is that the

land is flat, and the Egyptian people are also a 'flat' people… So how can Jihādī guerrilla warfare be established?"

With apologies to the righteous Muslims in Egypt—and I hope they are not saddened by this example—all peoples, in Egypt as elsewhere, have proven to be "flattened" populations. Their rulers have flattened their scholars and their Islamic Awakening with the sword, the whip, and gold; and the Islamic Awakening and the scholars, in turn, have flattened their populations. Thus, no resistance emerged from them except for a few upon whom Allāh bestowed His favor.

And here is my beloved, afflicted country, Syria, the land of Sham, the heartland of Islām; the Nusayris have turned its capital, Damascus, into a brothel for fornicators under the guise of tourism, to provide recreation for lecherous fornicators arriving from all corners of the earth, especially from neighboring countries, so they do not have to endure the trouble of traveling to Bangkok and boarding Boeing jets for it. There is no need for further embarrassment!

The same can be said of Morocco, Turkey, the hotels of Dubai, the brothels of the Maldives, and others, all the way to the Indonesian island of Bali!

The truth remains as Allāh Almighty has said:
{Indeed, Allāh will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. And when Allāh intends for a people ill, there is no repelling it. And there is not for them besides Him any patron.} (Ar-Ra'd: 11).

The bitter truth proves daily that for most Muslims, nothing remains of Islām but its name, and of religion, only its outward form. Among Muslims, those who adhere to what the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) and his Companions were upon—those he described as the "saved sect"—are but a few. And only a small number of latter-day men and women, scattered here and there, belong to their "victorious, Jihād-waging group" that fights for this religion. They worship Allāh,

holding onto hot coals, isolated, accused, and persecuted. How then can such peoples support Allāh and His Messenger, or engage in Jihād alongside the mujāhidīn?

However, I do not forget to acknowledge the many oppressed individuals who reject these conditions, who are trapped, unable to find a way out or a path forward. They obey Allāh in their personal lives and cry out to Him against the tyranny of rulers and the siege imposed by the fatwas of misguided scholars. May Allāh relieve their distress. But what I have described is the state of the overwhelming majority.

There is a painful truth that must be pointed out: the victory of the mujāhidīn over their enemies, and the success of Jihādīs in their projects and in achieving their goals of ruling by what Allāh has revealed, is, in reality, a victory for the Muslim nation and its peoples. It is a blessing from Allāh upon them when their conditions merit it.

Do the conditions of these so-called "Islamic" peoples today merit Allāh's relief through the victory of their Jihādī vanguard, so that this blessing may encompass them? By Allāh, no!
Do the conditions of their scholars and Islamic Awakening leaders merit such relief from Allāh and His victory for this Muslim nation? By Allāh, no!
Does the reality of their apostate, oppressive, infidel, and transgressing rulers merit relief and aid? By Allāh, no!
I believe this explains our current situation, *{and your Lord is not unjust to His servants}* (Fussilat 41:46).

Thus, most Jihādīs, where Jihād was established, achieved a special victory for themselves. They were martyred and met their Lord as martyrs, *{rejoicing in what Allāh has bestowed upon them of His bounty, and they receive good tidings about those [to be martyred] after them who have not yet joined them - that there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve}* (Āl ʿImrān: 170). If Allāh wills.

Allāh granted the accepted and sincere among them the greatest victory. He brought them near to Him and delivered them from this wretched reality.

Visible, witnessed victory—the defeat of infidel enemies, the collapse of apostate tyrants, the rout of oppressors and transgressors, and the implementation of the Sharīʿah of the Lord of the Worlds in the Muslim nation—is a blessing that descends from Allāh upon these peoples when they deserve it. This is what the divine laws dictate and historical evidence indicates.

Calamity and ruin have become widespread. We are heading towards a time when injustice and corruption will cover the earth and those upon it, until Allāh brings forth one who will fill it with equity and justice after it had been, and is currently heading towards being, filled with injustice and tyranny. Thus, the mujāhidīn in Allāh's path stood alone in the arena of confrontation, lost their battles, and were defeated in their encounters. This description is not an excuse for anyone to say: "Then what is the use of Jihād if the Muslim nation's condition merits defeat?"

This idea is a whisper from Satan and a sign of a weak soul. Two points clarify this:
First: Jihād is an individual obligation today, a personal act of worship that every Muslim must perform, whether willingly or unwillingly, just like prayer, Zakāh, fasting, and every other act of worship. One is rewarded for performing it, accountable for abandoning it, sinful for turning away from it, and an unbeliever for denying its obligation.
Indeed, confronting the aggression of disbelievers, apostates, and their allies today is more emphatic in its obligation than all other duties after affirming the Oneness of Allāh (Tawhīd), as we have previously presented the proofs in the second chapter.
Second: The mujāhidīn's performance of this obligation stirs the potentials for righteousness within the Islamic Awakening sector and its grassroots, then among its leaders and scholars. Then, the path of righteousness begins to extend through immense sacrifices, a path of suffering, and the price the Muslim nation must pay.

Righteousness spreads, and the Muslim nation begins its correct steps until it becomes deserving of Allāh’s victory.

And I believe, unless my Lord wills otherwise, that the Muslim nation will be granted victory, relief will descend upon it, the banner of its religion will be raised, and the Sharīʿah of its Lord will govern, merely due to the sacrifices of those who ascended to the heights of glory, those martyrdom-seekers and resisters here and there who rose to the levels of martyrdom, offering themselves as sacrifices for this religion as Allāh enabled them.

These individuals achieve an immediate, personal, intrinsic victory and pave the way for the Muslim nation’s victory—when the Muslim nation moves! This will be due to cumulative action that will take a long time, along a bitter path perfumed by the blood of martyrs, watered by the tears of widows and bereaved mothers, and driven by the groans of the tormented who sacrifice for their religion and their nation.

I do not speak of the blood of thousands, nor hundreds of thousands, but rather the blood of millions of martyrs from this Muslim nation, until we deserve relief, victory, and triumph, and become worthy of Allāh's promise.

The flower of our generation's youth gave their utmost, and we, along with them, gave our utmost. Praise be to Allāh, and we ask Him for acceptance.

I recall now that when we were in Kabul during the Taliban era, I often repeated to my wife as she tearfully saw me off at the door, having brought our four children for me to kiss before I left for the grueling front lines near Kabul, where we lived and defended. The roar of bombs and the whizzing of bullets from battles could be heard from our house, only 12 kilometers from the battlefield! I would tell her:

"Your weeping is hard for me, and this bewildered look in the children's eyes breaks my heart. But I am content and my conscience is clear because I know that my going out, and that of others like me, will shorten your tears and the tears of women like

you, sparing us the tears of millions of future weeping women. This anguish in my children's eyes will, if Allāh wills, save millions of Muslim children from tasting the bitterness of orphanhood and the pain of displacement. We are bearing the burden of the Muslim nation's calamities so that perhaps they may be lessened for them."

How many times did I slip out of bed just before the dawn call to prayer to attend to my duties in training, preparation, and garrison duty? My wife would grab my sleeve, saying, "Wait, be patient a little, it's very early." I would reply, "If I knew our enemies were sleeping and would wait for us, I would wait. But they are relentless in their war against us, and we are no less than them. Our example is the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), to whom Allāh said: *{And [remember] when you, [O Muhammad], left your family in the early morning to post the believers at their stations for the battle [of Uhud] - and Allāh is Hearing and Knowing.}* (Āl ʿImrān: 121)."

May Allāh fight against ostentation, and I seek refuge in Allāh from pride. I only mention this among many cherished memories to motivate Muslims by informing them of our conditions and to make them yearn for such experiences. These are magnificent images, the likes of which we read about in the accounts of our predecessors, which motivated us. Then, praise be to Allāh, we lived them, and I wish to describe them for those who missed them, so perhaps they too will be motivated.

Otherwise, I am the least of the mujāhidīn I know in terms of state and effort, and whoever fabricates has failed. I only say what the mujāhid Sultan Nūr al-Dīn Zangī (the Shāmī-Ḥalabī) used to say when he saw martyrs departing around him in the Jihād against the Crusaders. He would lament and say: "If Allāh had a need for me, He would have taken me. Indeed, actions are but by intentions." How fitting this statement is for me, as most of those I knew, those I prepared for Jihād and positioned for battle, or accompanied in it, have passed on!

But I am a writer, and I have a trust to uphold. If those sincere mujāhidīn I knew were writers and men of letters, and wrote about their experiences, they would have captivated the hearts of anyone who had a heart or lent an ear while being a witness. This is not a place for pride. And what pride could there be? Can any man from this Muslim nation hold his head high with pride when young Muslim girls and women have gone out to blow themselves up against the Jews in Palestine and the Russians in Chechnya? May the eyes of cowards never sleep! May those who sit idly on their beds find no comfort! And may Allāh not allow traitors to enjoy food, drink, or offspring!

Yes, one day Ibrahim left his hiding place at night, disguised, wandering through the neighborhoods of Kufa. He and his brother Muhammad, known as "al-Nafs al-Zakiyya" (the Pure Soul)—both esteemed Imāms from the Prophet's household, may Allāh be pleased with them—had risen against Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr, fighting his oppressive agents in Medina and Kufa. Then they went into hiding, concealed from the eyes of his agents and spies.
One night, as Ibrahim was out walking, he saw a woman rummaging through a garbage heap, taking a dead bird from it. He asked her about it, and she said she would feed it to the orphans under her care. He said to her, "You know it is forbidden dead meat." She replied, "It has become permissible for us (due to necessity)."
He (may Allāh be pleased with him) wept and said to her, "It is people like you who will cause me to come out tomorrow to have my neck struck!"
And so it was. His going out was not enough to solve the problem. He went out and was killed as a martyr, may Allāh have mercy on him.

Such incidents, and even worse, are what drove us out to have our necks struck, to be scorched by the heat of our women's tears and the deprivation of our children. We have nothing for them but the words of Allāh Almighty: *{Indeed, my protector is*

Allāh, who has sent down the Book; and He is an ally to the righteous.} (Al-Aʿrāf: 196), acting upon His command, Glorified is He: *{And let those [executors and guardians] fear [injustice] as if they [themselves] had left behind them weak offspring whom they would have feared for. So let them fear Allāh and speak words of appropriate justice.}* (An-Nisāʾ: 9). And I have no words more fitting than what I have stated previously when people ask us to whom we leave our families.

But have our efforts and the efforts of those like us been sufficient to solve the problem? Nay, the accumulated problems of disbelief and injustice?
No, they have not been sufficient. The efforts of people like us have not been sufficient, and Allāh knows best, they are not adequate.

Our generation and those who come after will pay an enormous price for the consequences of inaction, regression, and the path of corruption in every aspect over the past hundreds of years, especially in this last century, until we reached the dark state we are in today—a state that pleases neither Allāh, nor His Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him), nor the believers.

Whatever the so-called reformers, deluded inactive scholars, may think or claim—that their global verbal campaigns to repel aggression will solve the problem, and that the Muslim nation can rise without Jihād and sacrifices—they are deluded. They have abandoned the requirements indicated by the evidence of the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), and the lessons of history, and have instead sought solutions in the labyrinths of errant thought and philosophies!
More astonishingly, they seek the victory of Allāh's religion in arenas that incur His wrath and involve associating partners with Him—in the governmental apparatuses of sultans, in the administrations of occupying infidel invaders, and by carrying their ideas and their call! But the decision is with Allāh, before and after. And Allāh is predominant over His affair, but most of the hypocrites do not know.

Thus, three external factors converged: the strength and onslaught of the enemies, the corruption of most scholars, preachers, and their elite, and the regression in the condition of the majority of Muslim peoples. These became primary reasons for the absence of victory and relief, the failure of the Jihādī project, and the non-achievement of their goals.

That blessed cohort was let down, surrounded, and lost past battles and wars. In Allāh's promise lies hope for the days to come, if Allāh wills.

However, can we, as Jihādīs, attribute the reasons for repeated losses, defeats, and failures solely to these aforementioned external factors? No! There are internal reasons specific to the Jihādī current itself, due to shortcomings and conditions it experienced, which significantly contributed to the outcomes. This is what we will address in this chapter, if Allāh wills.

Before delving into the aspects of deficiency and the internal causes of failure within the Jihādī current, it is fitting to mention the positive aspects and achievements of this current throughout those years, rich with accomplishments and sacrifices.

The Positive Harvest and Achievements of the Jihādī Current Over the Past Forty Years:

Over forty years of accumulated efforts, sacrifices, and contributions from various groups, organizations, and individuals throughout the Arab and Muslim world, Jihādīs have made great achievements and secured many victories recorded in their honorable register, even if they failed to reach the ultimate goals they set for themselves, as previously mentioned. These achievements can be categorized as follows:

1. Intellectual and Methodological Achievements:

Through its scholars, leaders, and thinkers, and via collective literary and media efforts, the Jihādī current managed to present itself as a principal and distinct school within the contemporary Islamic Awakening. They succeeded in defining the features of its methodology through books, writings, and lectures, and in charting, with the ink of those scholars, thinkers, and leaders, the path for those who would follow them on that luminous way. The blood of thousands of martyrs who sacrificed their lives for Allāh in various fields has breathed life into these ideas and this methodology, establishing models and exemplars to inspire those treading their path towards Allāh's pleasure.

2. Daʿwah and Popular Achievements:

By the grace of Allāh first, then due to these experiences and the sacrifices made by martyrs and those who persevered in Allāh’s path, and through the intellectual heritage and the media and daʿwah efforts of Jihādīs at various levels over the past four decades, Jihādīs gained a distinct audience within the Muslim nation generally and the Islamic Awakening specifically. Their contributions became an example and a beacon for all those from the masses of this Muslim nation hastening in repentance to their Lord.

3. Military Achievements:

This is the most prominent and tangible aspect of Jihādī achievements. The mujāhidīn in Allāh's path in this era, whether from the Jihādī current or from various components of the broader Jihādī phenomenon fighting external and local enemies of Allāh, at both collective and individual levels, managed to write with their blood and the suffering of their prisoners and displaced individuals, military achievements that cannot be underestimated.

Some experiences provided models for long-term, continuous revolutions, such as those in Syria, Algeria, and Tajikistan. They also presented models for qualitative

confrontations and succeeded in toppling many heads of disbelief and enemy strongholds.
The mujāhidīn were able to execute many enemies of Allāh, including tyrants, presidents, ministers, and high-ranking as well as low-ranking aides of tyrants. The mujāhidīn soldiers of Allāh were able to retaliate against aggression with commensurate force in numerous countries.

Jihādīs also played a significant role in confronting the contemporary Crusader onslaught against Muslims in several issues. Among the most important was their role in Jihād in all open fronts of confrontation with external enemies, from the Philippines to Indonesia, to Kashmir, to Eritrea, to Somalia, and currently to Iraq. Most prominent and significant was the triumphant participation of Jihādīs in the Jihād in Chechnya against the Russian atheists, where the battle still rages. Likewise, their excellent performance in Bosnia against the Serb and Croat Crusaders, backed by various global Crusader powers, where they managed to thwart the genocidal project targeting Muslims there.

However, their greatest success was their participation in the Jihād in Afghanistan, where they managed to overthrow a bloody, collaborationist communist regime. Subsequently, they brought down the great superpower (the Soviet Union), dismembered it, furled its flag, and reduced it to a mere memory. These efforts resulted in the birth of a nucleus for a new Dār al-Islām (Abode of Islām) with the establishment of the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan and the appointment of an Amīr al-Muʾminīn (Commander of the Faithful), despite all attempts to prevent and abort it. For six years, the Emirate and its Amīr presented a model of governance by Sharīʿah in defiance of the New World Order, and a model of a fortress where believers could take refuge and live according to their religion and their Lord's commands. Then came the unique model with which the mujāhidīn inaugurated the

twenty-first century—America's supposed century—by transferring the confrontation to its very heartland.

Then came the steadfastness of the heroic Arab-Afghan mujāhidīn in the battles of Afghanistan and the open fronts of confrontation with the superpowers and their followers across the globe in what they termed the "Global War on Terrorism."
And here are the mujāhidīn, and what followed that day, continuing in the arenas of confrontation with the Crusaders and their allies in more than one field. The Jihād arena in Iraq is ablaze, and glimmers of hope are emerging in more than one place. Tomorrow is indeed close for those who watch.
The Jihādī military contributions and achievements will continue until Allāh's promise to this Muslim nation of victory, empowerment, and the raising of this religion's banners is fulfilled, if Allāh Almighty wills.

That long path of confrontations, spanning over forty years, was filled with thousands of battles and encounters in which those heroes proved to the enemies of Allāh, both internal and external, that despite the stage of decline experienced by Muslims in general, the miracle of the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him)—his foretelling that a group from his Ummah would continue to be manifest upon the truth, unharmed by those who forsake them or oppose them, until the command of Allāh comes while they are in that state—is an ongoing and still realized miracle. It has its men even in the darkest stages of this Muslim nation's history. If Jihādīs truly knew the value of their heritage and the significance of their history and experiences, and if those capable among them had rolled up their sleeves to document this glorious heritage, they would have left this Muslim nation a magnificent legacy, rich with the history of experiences, lessons learned, stories of valiant heroes, and examples of devout martyrs and patient mujāhidīn.
Unfortunately, however, time has folded away those records, and many wonderful stories and unique examples have vanished over the days. May Allāh have mercy on

their authors and reward them abundantly. As ʿUmar (may Allāh be pleased with him) said when he inquired about the martyrs of the conquests, and they recounted stories of those they knew, then mentioned others whom no one knew; he (may Allāh be pleased with him) said, "It does them no harm that people did not know them, as Allāh Almighty knew them."

4. Political Achievements:

Although the ultimate goal declared by Jihādīs—the overthrow of pre-Islamic (jāhilī) regimes and the establishment of an Islamic system in their ruins—was not achieved in all the arenas where they operated, along the path to this goal and alongside these efforts, Jihādīs accomplished many political achievements. Among the most important are:

- Threatening the projects of the pre-Islamic (jāhilī) ruling systems, exposing their falsehood, and stripping them of legitimacy.
- Exposing normalization projects with the Jews and the West pursued by regimes inclined to do so, especially projects of Westernization and the propagation of Islām in a Crusader-like manner.
- Jihādīs were also able to confront the deviations of the Islamic Awakening methodologically, practically, and through media.
- And they were able, by Allāh's grace, to prove to the invading occupiers that the Muslim nation, despite its collapse, is not an easy prey.

Among the political achievements whose results will compound over time until they align with Allāh Almighty's decree is the emergence of those qualified to achieve the greatest accomplishment: establishing the nucleus of the transient Dār al-Islām, defending it, and expanding its company until the promised Rightly-Guided Caliphate, about which the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) gave glad tidings, is established. It will undoubtedly be established, and it will come

through Jihād, not through dialogue, electronic forums, or parliamentary battles. For seriousness is not born from frivolity. Truth is not born from error. And virtue does not arise from paths of vice. The Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) spoke the truth when he said: *"I was sent with the sword until Allāh alone is worshipped. My provision was placed under the shadow of my spear. Humiliation and subservience were placed upon those who disobey my command. And whoever imitates a people is one of them."*

Errors, Gaps, and Negative Outcomes of the Jihādī Current Over Forty Years:

One might ask: If you believe that the Jihādī current has achieved all these accomplishments mentioned in the preceding section, then why mention the errors?
I say: It is for the sake of well-being. As Al-Mutanabbī said:
"I have not seen among the flaws of people a flaw... like the deficiency of those capable of perfection."
And so that we may come closer to achieving the desired goal for which the Jihādīs set out. This can only happen through correction, development, and improvement of the path, after Allāh's guidance.

An objector might argue that listing flaws and shortcomings exposes secrets and vulnerabilities that could benefit the enemy. I respond that these gaps are, unfortunately, better known to the enemy than to the members of our own ranks, who are the ones concerned with reform. Thus, there is no exposure of secrets, especially since most of them are lessons from the past, and their proponents have passed on. Praise be to Allāh, besides Whom no other is praised for adversity; the scholars of the sultans, the media of the tyrants, and international agencies have left no real or fabricated deficiency without attributing it to us to tarnish our reputation.

We mention these errors to avoid and rectify them. We mention outdated and worn-out methods in order to replace them. We also mention those erroneous concepts, most of which are new to the Jihādī current, so they may be corrected. This knowledge is obligatory even for the grassroots of the Jihādī current, let alone their cadres and seniors. This should not be whispered or kept secret.

The process of purposeful criticism must be practiced in an atmosphere of freedom, honesty, credibility, and frankness, between conscious leadership and a base that deserves to participate in knowledge because they are men—men at the peak of manhood, who made the decision to confront at a time when resolve faltered. It is not permissible to thrust them forward and sacrifice them using outdated methods that have been tried and proven to fail, or erroneous concepts that have led to failure, and sometimes even disasters.

Treating illnesses involves three essential stages, after trusting in Allāh and seeking well-being and cure from Him.
First: Acknowledging the illness and intending to seek treatment.
Second: Consulting a trustworthy, faithful, and honest physician, revealing all flaws, ailments, and shortcomings to him without fear or shame, even if they pertain to private matters one might be shy about.
Third: Taking the medicine, even if bitter, with determination, sincerity, and resolve to achieve recovery.

These stages must be undertaken by those concerned with healing the Jihādī endeavor from its ailments. This applies also at the level of the entire Islamic Awakening, school by school, group by group, and at the level of overall responsibility for the Islamic Awakening. Without this objectivity, healing will not occur—and Allāh knows best—because these are divine laws that favor no one.

What is the benefit if parents take their sick child for treatment of a debilitating disease that is about to consume his body, and when the doctor asks about his condition, they begin to list his good qualities! And when he asks them about his ailment, they do not mention it, or mention only parts of it and hide others, out of love, tenderness, and well-intentioned motives!
Such a child is destined for demise if Allāh's mercy does not intervene, because the tenderness and love practiced upon him are of the killing kind—an ignorant and backward tenderness.

Pointing out flaws and shortcomings from outside the ranks can be annoying, even rejected if it creates a feeling of ill intent. If a doctor tells you your child has scabies, you will feel pain but accept it with an open heart, ask about the treatment, and implement it. If the doctor were a family friend, it would be easier because you are sure of his affection and good intentions. This is different from a distant neighbor telling you your "son is mangy"! You will find yourself predisposed to reject the observation, and perhaps attribute the characteristic of mange back to him and his advice, and not accept it from him.
The process of presenting shortcomings and gaps must be done internally and at the level of every gathering and school.

The one needy of Allāh Almighty—and praise be to Allāh—is one of the sons of this Jihādī current. He is among the remnants of a generation, most of which has been shattered and has passed on. I ask Allāh that this is for a good He intended, for further contribution and fulfillment of the trust, and not because we have fallen from His sight, Blessed and Exalted is He, such that He did not choose us among those He chose.

I have long been, and still am, an advocate and defender, with all enthusiasm and sometimes even ferocity, of this current, its men, and its works. This is evident in confronting the attacks of adversaries from the enemies of this blessed school (the

Jihādī current), and what I have written and lectured is the greatest proof of that, praise be to Allāh. However, I am not here in that capacity. I am here in the capacity of offering internal advice and constructive criticism of our school, our work, and our method, with the intention of discerning paths closer to soundness and correctness, according to my belief. Allāh is the granter of success, and He guides to the path.

This is what I will try to extract, according to what Allāh Almighty facilitates, in the second part of this book, if Allāh Almighty wills.

We—the Jihādī community—have criticized other non-Islamic schools of action, rejected them, and adopted a stance of refusal and hostility towards them. Then, we criticized all non-Jihādī schools of the Islamic Awakening—be they daʿwah-oriented, reformist, Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated, Salafī, or others—motivated by mutual admonition and by our right as members of the general Islamic Awakening, to prove that Jihād is the solution, or as a means of repelling malicious attacks.
Now, it is our turn to place ourselves before the mirror, review our actions and their results, hold ourselves accountable before we are held accountable, and weigh our deeds before they are weighed against us. This is before Allāh Almighty holds us accountable for negligence in reviewing and learning lessons from ourselves and others, and before generations and the Muslim nation hold us accountable, especially those who come after us, for not enlightening them about the mistakes of a bygone phase, and for not imparting to them the lessons of experiences for which we paid with pure blood.

We must weigh our actions by the scale of sincerity and correctness. As for sincerity—O Allāh, Your aid—each is according to his conscience: *{Rather, man, against himself, will be a witness, Even if he presents his excuses.}* (Al-Qiyāmah: 14-15).
As for correctness, it is the scale of the Book and Sunnah, then the logic of reason

and the lessons of experience. Perhaps Allāh will grant us success in what He loves and is pleased with, and accept from us, then bring us closer to victory over His enemies.

Types of Errors and Gaps that Occurred During the Course and Experiences of the Jihādī Current, According to My Perception, and Allāh Almighty Knows Best:

If we imagine a man walking on a path towards a specific goal, and we find him walking and staggering, falling at times and rising at others, deviating from his goal at times and walking on the correct path at others, weakening at times and strengthening at others, and then we find him not reaching his goal in the end, our observation would lead us to identify one of three general reasons for his incapacity and poor performance:

1. Errors in the way of thinking and conceptualization of the path (intellectual flaws).
2. Errors and flaws in his physical structure and its inability to perform correctly (structural flaws).
3. Errors in the method of progression and outlining steps unsuitable for the path (methodological/operational flaws).

This is what mostly happened to the majority of Jihādī endeavors and their current over approximately the past half-century. I point out here that I am undertaking a general assessment, not addressing the experience of a specific group, organization, individuals, or a particular country's experiences. Rather, I am attempting an evaluation, considering the Jihādī current as a conceptual unit, as a school of thought and a set of experiences. I will mention the types of flaws and errors that occurred in the course of the current as a whole. It goes without saying that this does not mean that a specific organization or experience was afflicted by all these shortcomings or

some of them. However, some experiences may have possessed one, three, more, or fewer of the deficiencies I will mention.

Some (Jihādīs) might imagine they were in perfect health and not afflicted by any of these ailments, but it was just bad luck, or as they often repeat, "Allāh has decreed, and what He wills, He does." Let them then praise Allāh for the perfect health they enjoyed and bask in their positive assumptions about themselves and be at ease.
I am here to present errors and problems that afflicted most schools of the Jihādī current. If I were to give examples, I would start with myself and the experiences I underwent, so no one would be saddened. But I am generalizing for the sake of benefit.

Returning to our point, I reiterate that the errors and flaws in the course of the Jihādī current were of three types:
(1) Methodological and intellectual errors.
(2) Structural and organizational errors.
(3) Errors in the method of operation and course of action.

Let us enumerate, detail, and explain, as much as clarity allows, those errors with which we, the workers in the Jihādī current, have been afflicted over a blessed course that spanned nearly four decades. I ask Allāh to accept from each of us what was good and to overlook what was bad, for He is the Lord of piety and the Lord of forgiveness.

First: Methodological and Intellectual Errors:

Perhaps this is one of the most important areas where flaws were generally minimal, thanks to Allāh Almighty's favor upon the mujāhidīn and the blessing of His saying: *{And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allāh is with the doers of good.}* (Al-ʿAnkabūt: 69).

I have previously presented the most important intellectual and methodological foundations of the Jihādī current and its various groups.
However, some Jihādī groups, organizations, and experiences have encountered some errors and flaws in the intellectual and methodological aspect, according to my belief, and Allāh knows best. Among the most important of these errors and methodological flaws that served as internal obstacles to the work are the following:

1. Infiltration of extremist ideas into the methodologies of some Jihādīs:

As I previously explained, the Jihādī current generally passed through two intellectual phases:
a. The intellectual-activist phase.
b. The Salafī-Jihādī thought phase.

I mentioned how the second phase complemented the doctrinal and jurisprudential gaps that existed in Jihādī thought, and I highlighted the positive aspects of this integration. However, I point out here that these positive aspects were sometimes accompanied by significant negativity due to misapplication by some groups or individuals in certain experiences. This led some segments of Jihādīs to incline towards levels of rigidity and extremism in their doctrinal, jurisprudential, and politico-legal discourse. It also caused some Jihādī methodological literature to contain generalizations and doctrinal rules which, coupled with factors of ignorance, zeal, and psychological pressures among some Jihādīs, became a basis for "takfīrī" ideas (ideas of declaring others infidels) that overstepped the boundaries upon which Jihādī thought was founded. I am not saying here that Jihādī thought was mixed with takfīrī thought, no. Rather, I am saying that such propositions from certain figures of the Salafī-Jihādī current, or from some prominent scholars or students of knowledge who joined it, were either severe and extremist, or were formulated in such general terms that some later Jihādīs tended to transgress and expand in declaring others infidels.

It also allowed some affiliated with the "takfīrī current" to adopt these texts as a basis and to cite their authors in their writings. This made the margin on these topics between "Jihādī thought" and "takfīrī thought" very thin, enabling adversaries—whether intelligence agencies, scholars of the sultan, or regime media—to use them as evidence to brand Jihādīs as takfīrīs. This, as I have shown, was one of the most successful methods used to strike at Jihādīs. So how did this happen?

This occurred when there was a conflation between the Salafī creed and the contemporary Salafī methodology and its methods—this methodology which the majority of the Jihādī current adopted since the late 1980s, as I mentioned, during the first phase of the Arab Afghans—and the methodology of the contemporary Salafī current, its jurisprudence, and the style of its contemporary scholars and pioneers, especially scholars from Saudi Arabia and those educated in their school. Then, what branched off from this school, which in most cases traces its origins to the heritage of the second and third generations of scholars of the Wahhābī call.

In reality, a study of the "traditional Salafī school," its doctrines, and its jurisprudence, when compared with "contemporary Salafism," its principles, and its intellectual and doctrinal schools, reveals significant differences.
The influence of contemporary Salafism and its branches has spread throughout the Arab and Muslim world. In the last two decades, it has diversified into schools, paths, and madhhabs, whose variety, jurisprudential heritage, and an opinions of their proponents often reach the point of conflict and contradiction, all within what is known as the "Salafī current."
This is a thorny, complex, and important issue. It must be studied and scrutinized, and this requires a separate book and research, which is not its place here. I am merely pointing to the influences of this contemporary Salafī current on Jihādī thought and the course of the Jihādī current, both negatively and positively.

As for the positive aspects, they were covered in previous chapters: the activist Jihādī current of the early 1980s found its solution to its jurisprudential-activist problems, as I said, in Salafī jurisprudence and Salafī creed.
As for the negative aspects, which is the subject of the current paragraph, it led to scholarly cadres from the Salafī current, who were not activist Jihādīs, joining the activist Jihādī current that had emerged from Muslim Brotherhood and Qutbist thought. It also led to the emergence of a class of students of knowledge among Jihādīs who studied under them during the first phase of the Afghan Jihād and the subsequent period of safe havens. They adopted their methodology without having the competence for research, issuing fatwas, or tackling major issues.
Because one of the greatest afflictions of the Muslim nation in this era is the aversion of firmly-grounded scholars from Jihād, from taking stances for truth, and from addressing the major politico-legal calamities facing the Muslim nation—issues of governance, loyalty and disavowal, and their application to the reality of these governments, societies, and conditions of invasion and occupation. This was reflected in the Jihādī current and phenomenon by it being a current largely devoid of senior, firmly-grounded scholars, or even moderately knowledgeable ones, except in rare cases.

Thus, a fatal phenomenon infiltrated the Jihādī current, one that originally arose within the contemporary Salafī current, which itself was based on sound doctrine and authentic jurisprudence. However, certain practical applications led to disasters that then spread to the Jihādī current. To make matters worse, Jihādīs are generally revolutionaries and zealous in defending Allāh's religion. So, their enthusiasm, and the enthusiasm of some students of knowledge among them, was added to those undisciplined foundations of the contemporary Salafī method. This opened the door to severe storms of jurisprudential chaos at times, which manifested as extremely harsh and extremist fatwas and opinions. Whether these were erroneous or correct but formulated in a generalized manner, they could be used by ignorant members of

the Jihādī current or by takfīrīs as a basis for extremism, rigidity, and declaring others infidels without proper controls. This helped demolish a barrier whose existence is very important between Jihādī thought and takfīrī thought.
Re-emphasizing this barrier is one of the most important priorities for the restoration process within the Jihādī current in the upcoming phase, if Allāh wills.

2. Extremism of some later Jihādīs in sectarian adherence to their concept of "Salafism"

This problem is a derivative of the previous one. Some circles and individuals among Jihādīs, or those who later joined their arenas from previous adherents of the Salafī current, were characterized by this problem.
The foundational principle upon which the Jihādī current was established is to mobilize the Muslim nation for Jihād in the path of Allāh and to repel various types of aggressors. Although it is incumbent upon the mujāhidīn and their leadership, as they strive to adhere to the methodology of the Victorious Group in knowledge and action, that their beliefs align with those of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), his Companions, and those who followed them in excellence—our righteous predecessors whose creed and methodology we must emulate, and whose principles and methodology must be the basis for our own.
However, there is a very important point that most of those who claim affiliation with Salafism in this era—both Jihādī and non-Jihādī Salafīs who monopolize this banner and this noble designation—have overlooked. This point is that the reality of the Muslim nation, with its hundreds of millions, is not like the reality of the Companions and the best generations that followed, nor does it resemble the reality of most of Islamic history, let alone align with our standards as Jihādīs and Salafīs. We have been afflicted by a highly complex reality after the fall of the Caliphate and the Westernization and internal and external crises witnessed by the Arab and Islamic world.

The principle is that we, as Jihādīs, are concerned with accommodating the Muslim nation, the general populace, and directing them towards fulfilling the obligation of Jihād against various types of aggressors, both external enemies and their lackeys among the tyrannical governments. It is known that the religiously committed among this Muslim nation, the majority of its scholars, and the religious circles within the Islamic Awakening, are not predominantly Salafī in methodology, even though it is my methodology and I believe it to be doctrinally soundest.

Most of the committed Muslims and scholars of the Muslim nation (in its entirety as an Islamic Ummah) are overwhelmingly followers of jurisprudential schools (madhhabs) and not followers of Salafī jurisprudence. Many of them also do not adhere to the Salafī methodology in creed, with the majority being Ashʿarīs, particularly among scholars and students of knowledge. As for the religious common folk, they are imitators of these circles. This has been the state of Ahl al-Sunnah for over a thousand years. It is known that the contemporary non-Jihādī Salafī current has engaged in many doctrinal and jurisprudential debates and issues with these circles, reaching the level of Byzantine arguments over decades, even centuries.

There is no doubt that the problem of aggressors descending upon us and the obligation to repel them requires us to proceed according to the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah wa-l-Jamāʿah in Jihād with Muslim rulers and common folk, be they righteous or wicked, knowledgeable or ignorant. The interest of uniting hearts and rallying all ranks for Jihād is undoubtedly and indisputably prioritized over the interest of raising most of these jurisprudential and doctrinal polemics, especially now in our current weakened state. This is from the core of the Salafī methodology that these individuals claim. The evidence for this is abundant.

However, some Jihādīs and their leading students of knowledge, or those who joined them later, dragged the Jihādī milieu into a state of conflict with those Islamic and religious circles. They imposed conditions that, by their standards, were prohibitive,

becoming a real obstacle in dealing with them and calling them to Jihād. This played a major role in causing the Jihādī current to lose its popularity and become elitist. It also drew many of its segments and personalities into side battles where they applied the rules of loyalty and disavowal to many Muslims, disassociating from them instead of the Jihādī current accommodating them in a single rank, or at least in a single alliance against the various types of aggressors to repel them, or at the very least, to keep them neutral.

But many Jihādīs, due to this methodological inclination, became narrow-minded. Many of them ruined relationships and interests that could have advanced the Muslim nation more effectively towards fulfilling the obligation of Jihād. This was due to not considering the reality and the jurisprudence of priorities, benefits, and harms in their activism, which was characterized by much rigidity with texts and their application out of context.

I recall engaging in many debates and discussions with some Jihādīs, including leaders and grassroots members, emphasizing the necessity of combining our Salafī-Jihādī identity and adherence to the methodology of the righteous predecessors with the need to be gentle with Muslims and engage in Jihād with them. We should call them to Jihād with us, accommodating their existing jurisprudential and doctrinal schools, which ultimately fall within the circle of Ahl al-Sunnah wa-l-Jamāʿah. But unfortunately, I often discovered that we were on one path and these brothers were on another. Indeed, in these areas, I heard accusations, disparagements, and strange ideas, and I faced hardship.

Whoever reads the writings of Sheikh Abdullah Azzam will find much about his suffering from this problem and its proponents, as they created crises with the Afghans due to issues of madhhab and creed, even with the common people.

One of the strange things I recall in this context is that one of these very Salafī Jihādīs once said to me during a discussion: "Jihād must be under a Salafī banner, its leadership must be Salafī in composition, its rulings Salafī in methodology, and

everything must be based on evidence. If we accept non-Salafīs to fight with us, it is out of necessity, but they can have no share in leadership; rather, we lead them like cattle to perform the obligation of Jihād!"
I could not truly understand how we would engage in Jihād with brothers in religion and creed if our relationship with them was like that with cattle, based on pulling from one side and kicking and butting from the other!
Unfortunately, this phenomenon was not confined to narrow circles. Some Jihādīs even refused to work with us one day on a Jihādī project because I was responsible for it, saying, "How can we engage in Jihād with a man who does not raise his hands during rukūʿ (bowing) and prays according to innovation!" I do not know who told them that someone who does not raise his hands, based on evidence he possesses, is an innovator! Not to mention that all that was happening was that I was following the fatwa of scholars who permitted accommodating the local people in their madhhab to win their hearts, as stated by Imām Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr and others. I would not raise my hands during rukūʿ and when rising from it when praying with the Afghans, who are known to be Ḥanafīs, most of them fanatical and ignorant. We and they were in great harmony and engaged in a binding defensive Jihād. Senior Arab mujāhidīn leaders like the martyr Abdullah Azzam (may Allāh have mercy on him) and Sheikh Osama (may Allāh preserve him) requested this and urged the mujāhidīn to do so, and they faced much hardship in this regard. These are examples to clarify the point; otherwise, the examples are numerous.
How often were prominent Imāms subjected to criticism in those circles if they engaged in some form of allegorical interpretation (ta'wīl) or other such matters, like the great Imāms of Ahl al-Sunnah such as Ibn Ḥajar, al-Nawawī, and others. How often was the sanctity of the four madhhabs and some of their Imāms violated, especially the esteemed Imām Abū Ḥanīfah (may Allāh have mercy on him) and others, under the pretext of championing the Salafī methodology and creed.
Although in my own belief I follow the Salafī methodology without fanaticism or

narrowness, and I was known for this, many of our brothers would become impatient even with that.

It is known that these problems are issues of the Salafī current and not of the Jihādī current, but they spread to it. One senior Arab-Afghan mujāhid, who was very Salafī and formerly a Surūrī, even rebuked me because I said "may Allāh have mercy on him" after mentioning Imām al-Nawawī. He said, "Do not say 'may Allāh have mercy on him.'" I asked, "What should I say?" He replied, "Say 'may Allāh forgive him,' for he was not upon the Sunnah!"

Once, after one of my lectures, some of these mujāhidīn, some of whom were leaders in their groups, reproached me because I mentioned Imām Ḥasan al-Bannā, Sheikh Saʿīd Ḥawwā, and Sheikh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah, saying "may Allāh have mercy on them," even though they knew my criticisms of the Muslim Brotherhood's methodology. They asked, "Why do you ask for mercy for innovators?" I replied that the madhhab of Ahl al-Sunnah is to ask for mercy for any Muslim who has died and whose outward appearance was that of a Muslim. One of the senior brothers (may Allāh preserve him) responded, "Imām Sufyān did not believe in asking for mercy for one who died upon innovation!" I told him, "May Allāh have mercy on him; other Imāms of the Salaf held a different view. One must consider the innovation, its type, its level, evidence of the mistaken person's good intentions, and the context of mentioning mercy." But there was no benefit from the discussion, which, if prolonged, would have led to me being registered with them as an innovator, or even as a defender of innovations! And to Allāh belongs the command.

It was one of the simplest things for one of them to end the discussion by saying: "I have conveyed to you the requirement of the call to Tawhīd! I believe in such-and-such before Allāh and I reject such-and-such."

How many relationships were severed, and how many disputes arose between these individuals and many mujāhidīn, let alone other Muslims, because of this approach. This was one of the greatest ailments that afflicted the Jihādī methodology due to

the influence of the negative aspects of the Salafī current.
I repeat my earlier statement that the immense benefits the Jihādī current intellectually reaped from the Salafī methodology are too numerous to count. However, this was not without negative side effects, some of which have been mentioned. I truly could not imagine how these individuals, who could not even reach an understanding with other Jihādīs and Islamists, could lead a resistance that must be popular, with all that the word "popular" entails in terms of diversity and differing inclinations.

3. One-dimensionality of the Jihādī discourse, its lack of comprehensiveness, its restriction to issues of loyalty and disavowal (al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ) and sovereignty (ḥākimiyyah), and the narrow scope of the Jihādī current's library and literary output:

Compared to the general schools of the contemporary Islamic Awakening and considering their comprehensive libraries, we find that the Jihādī library—the sum of its methodologies, books, and literature, even including internal bulletins of various groups and organizations, periodic statements, or other materials—is small in quantity and one-dimensional in its content. The books are few, and the publications are limited. The volume of this output does not correspond to the magnitude of their contributions and performance, the enormity of their sacrifices, and the abundance of their experiences. Much could have been written about their history, lessons, analyses, parables, eyewitness accounts, and biographies of men and martyrs. But unfortunately, the output is very meager and almost non-existent in many movements. If we look at the type of content, we find it restricted to issues of ḥākimiyyah, the principles of al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ, and creeds. Creativity within it is scarce, mostly consisting of repetition and reiteration, and largely relying on quotations and restatements of the jurisprudence of Imam Ibn Taymiyyah, some imams of the Salafī school, and the heritage of the scholars of the Wahhābī call, may

Allāh Almighty have mercy on them.
Although contemporary issues are numerous, politico-legal and practical political fields are vast, and the need for writing in them is great—as well as in areas of jurisprudence, contemporary Jihād rulings, and related sciences like political science, administration, education, general culture necessary for a mujāhid, discussing present and future issues of the Muslim nation, and engaging with new developments and topics of dialogue in the Arab and Islamic reality—the Jihādī current in general was characterized by a scarcity of writers. Qualified leaders, symbols, and those capable of writing were preoccupied with fieldwork. Security pursuits and unstable conditions prevented them from contributing in this field. Therefore, the Jihādī library was limited either to military books and training and operational manuals, or to what I referred to regarding issues of ḥākimiyyah and matters of al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ.

4. Weakness of educational material in the curricula of the Jihādī current:

The field of educating the grassroots of the Jihādī current is one of the largest areas that suffered from deficiency and a decline in standards, especially after the 1990s. Since the security pursuits began, people were preoccupied with the onslaught of fear and hunger; they were afflicted by hardship, adversity, and loss of wealth and lives; and they were tossed about by migrations and refuges to the four corners of the earth.
Unlike the first and second generations of Jihādīs, who managed, before those confrontations, to achieve a reasonable level of education for their initial cadres between approximately 1965 and 1985, circumstances did not allow Jihādīs after that to implement comprehensive educational programs except on a limited scale. It is also noticeable that the Jihādī current's reliance in education was not on a contemporary library and curricula they developed according to their current needs, but rather on classical heritage texts or on some books from other Islamic

Awakening schools, which often contain material contradicting the Jihādī perspective on many issues.

After 1985, Jihādī circles—camps, gatherings, and places of activity—were dominated by educational curricula with two dimensions, as I mentioned. Either military, limited to military subjects and combat training courses, or some materials on issues of ḥākimiyyah, al-walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ, creed, and the Salafī methodology. During the second phase of the Arab Afghans under the Taliban, I observed that the third generation of Jihādīs was increasingly characterized by ignorance and a lack of educational grounding in most of its segments. Many Jihādīs in this phase (1996-2001) showed little interest in it, despite the availability of means, camps, safe havens—indeed, very comfortable ones under the Taliban compared to the refuges of diaspora and the phase of pursuit. However, most people were active in and keen on military subjects, and did not give other educational aspects the importance they deserved. Therefore, this was reflected in that phase by many internal problems and crises, which I believe were due to the decline in levels of behavior and general ethics.

The influx of many young men from the ordinary Muslim masses, filled with emotions, enthusiasm, and sincerity, but with low levels of Sharīʿah knowledge, religious commitment, principles of Islamic ethics and dealings, and even levels of worship, contributed to this. Many Jihādī circles were characterized by a very shallow level of qualifications in these areas. Psychological pressures, the effects of security pursuits, the general problems of Arabs and Muslims, internal problems within Islamic Awakening circles, the opposition of its leaders to Jihādīs, and the immersion of most of them in the bandwagon of sultan's scholars and tyrannical regimes' apparatuses all played a part.

All this led many Jihādī circles, in the absence of an educational methodology, to be characterized by harshness, aloofness, lack of mercy, and the absence of the exemplary figures often described in books on spiritual refinement (raqāʾiq) and

stories of righteous predecessors and successors in areas of worship, asceticism, good character, gentleness towards Muslims, excusing them, showing them mercy, and guiding them.

Many atmospheres were tense, and numerous Jihādīs exhibited behavior closer to a neurotic state than to the conduct expected of a qualified mujāhid, educated in knowledge, character, worship, and behavior.

This was a reflection of the weakness of the educational methodology in terms of material and application. Allāh is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.

Thus, I used to observe that many Jihādīs had reduced Islām, its beliefs, and its rituals to the obligation of Jihād, thinking it was the entirety of religion. They reduced Jihād—with its rulings, etiquettes, behaviors, and characteristics required by its status as the pinnacle of Islām—to mere fighting. And they reduced fighting—with the patience, perseverance, preparation, and ethics it demands—to merely witnessing battles. Even during the witnessing of battles, one would notice a lack of patience, perseverance, and endurance of long garrison duty. They had reduced the concept of fighting to simply firing weapons.

I, along with many veteran brothers, noticed that the atmosphere within Jihādī circles in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries began to indicate an impending trial and tribulation that would descend to restore those sincere, good souls to their purity, their need for their Lord, and the ethics and educational components of their religion. This is what came with the events of September and their subsequent repercussions.

{But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allāh Knows, while you know not.} (Al-Baqarah: 216).

5. Absence of the impact of understanding contemporary realities (fiqh al-wāqiʿ) in the politico-legal methodology of many Jihādīs:

This, in my view, was caused by the weakness or absence of educational materials and studies that would aid in this understanding. Consequently, there was an imbalance in determining who is with us and who is against us, and confusion between the circles of enemies, neutrals, and supporters, as well as their rights and how to deal with them.

During the last decade of the twentieth century, the realities in the Arab and Muslim world, and indeed the entire world, became complex in all their political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions. All fields of human activity in these worlds witnessed enormous complexity, development, and diversification.

Societies in the Arab and Muslim world are, unfortunately, generally lagging in keeping pace with levels of civilizational knowledge, to a regrettable extent.

The Islamic Awakening in general, being a phenomenon emerging from that reality, was characterized by many influences of that general backwardness and a lack of awareness of the era it was in. While Islamic parties and groups from the school of political Islamic Awakening, along with many of their leaders and cadres, advanced in fields of knowledge and understanding of reality due to political awareness and practice, the remaining schools of the Islamic Awakening—the daʿwah-oriented, reformist, and what is termed Salafī, as well as the Jihādī school—were characterized by a low level of knowledge, civilizational awareness, and understanding of reality. The non-political schools were so due to their isolation from living reality, and the Jihādī current because the majority of its members were young people who, due to their youth in most cases and difficult security conditions, did not get their share of civilizational knowledge and understanding of reality, except in rare cases within some groups, cadres, and personalities.

Considering that today's battle is managed not only in the military and security fields, where Jihādīs and Islamists in general can perform well, but also in the fields of politics, media, and economics, and even in military and security confrontations, the level of knowledge and science has become crucial. Therefore, the low general

level among the majority of Jihādīs in understanding contemporary realities with all its data and dimensions was reflected in their methodologies, literature, media, the content and style of their discourse, and its delivery. This resulted in an imbalance in priorities, understanding of realities, and confusion between what general texts require and what reality necessitates. There was also confusion in classifying segments of people—who is with us and who is against us—and disarray in determining battle priorities.

Given the weakness of the institutional structure in the Jihādī current generally, the narrow scope for consultation and utilization of cadres, and the preference of many amīrs for yes-men, this ignorance combined with that flaw to produce a tragic result manifested in a weak level of battle management, failure in determining methods of confrontation, and poor alignment between intellectual methodology and military, political, and media action. The impact of reality was absent in issuing rulings and making political, military, and fateful decisions. It is well-known that the validity of a fatwa depends on two necessary pillars: knowledge of the Sharīʿah and understanding of reality. Assuming the existence of correct Sharīʿah understanding in many cases, the absence of understanding reality led to decisions closer to being crippled than being described as on a straight path.

6. Failure to adopt the concept of Jihād against the external aggressor and entering the vortex of confronting regimes:

This was initially triggered by the provocations of the regimes. Then, a methodological principle was adopted as a result of a literal understanding of Allāh Almighty's saying: *{O you who have believed, fight those adjacent to you of the disbelievers}* (At-Tawbah: 123), and applying it to the ruling apostate regimes. This led to entering conflicts whose nature and course were determined by the enemy, resulting in losses drawn from the Muslim nation's reserves without tangible benefit or desired outcome.

The Jihādī current originally emerged due to the crisis of confrontation with the pre-Islamic ignorance (Jāhiliyyah) weighing upon the chests of Muslims, represented by apostate ruling systems. The matter evolved, as we explained, from abstract Jihādī thought to practical application.

Jihādī organizations were established and clashed in many arenas with those ruling systems. This trend was supported by Sharīʿah ruling and an existing reality. The existing reality was that the hardship and punishment inflicted upon Muslims in general, Islamists in particular, and Jihādīs specifically, came from the ruling regimes and their security apparatuses, which rationally and logically necessitated confrontation. Likewise, the Sharīʿah ruling and the command for Jihād are derived from many texts, including the saying of Allāh Almighty:

{O you who have believed, fight those adjacent to you of the disbelievers}. Based on this jurisprudence and this reality, Jihād organizations operated for nearly thirty years (1960-1990).

However, with the rise of globalization in everything alongside the launch of the New World Order, the evolving level of external invasion, the strong alliance between global and local apostate ruling infidel powers and international forces, and the hypocritical forces linked to them, and with the development of confrontation arenas and methods of pursuing Jihādīs from local to regional to global levels, Jihādīs should have realized this and developed their methodologies and operational style, and not remained stuck in vicious circles drawn by international Jewish-Crusader powers and their allies, leading to a futile war of attrition. But the rigidity of methodologies and understanding within most of the Jihādī current did not permit the shift necessary to give the jurisprudence of confronting aggression its due consideration. The basis remained the command to fight those disbelievers nearest to them, as if this meant the nearest security officer or the nearest apostate government in the Jihādīs' area of operation. This involved a narrowness of perspective, whether in understanding the interpretation of the text

or in understanding the operational Sunnah that clarifies it, derived from the Prophet's (peace and blessings be upon him) wars and his heading to fight the Romans while disbelievers closer to him were around. There was also ignorance of explicit statements by scholars about the non-binding nature of this command in its literal sense. This methodological rigidity was reflected in the resistance of most Jihādīs to moving towards global Jihād and globalizing the confrontation when it was proposed by a limited segment of Jihādīs in the late twentieth century.

7. Inability to define the Sharīʿah-based and operational content of several fundamental concepts:

The contemporary Jihādī project introduced a number of fundamental terms and designations upon which the organizational structure and operational conduct of Jihādī groups were based. However, these created problems that Jihādīs could not resolve and clarify, including:

The Jihādī Group: What is it? What is its definition? What is the nature of its relationship with surrounding groups? What is the legitimacy of the multiplicity of such Jihādī and non-Jihādī groups? What is the extent of its powers and scope in relation to the general Muslim community? What are the justifications and legitimacy for its existence?

Emirate, Consultation (Shūrā), and Decisions: What are the limits of the amīr's authority in his relations with the grassroots, leadership, and institutions of the group? Consequently, what is the method of decision-making in the group? What is the nature and bindingness of shūrā? Is it a private or public emirate?

Pledge of Allegiance (Bayʿah), Hearing, and Obedience: What is the nature of this bayʿah? What is the content of its contract? Consequently, what are the mutual rights and duties between the amīr and the individual, or between the individual and the group? How is it dissolved? Based on what?

What are the consequences of breaking it? When is it legitimate and when is it

forbidden? And so on, for these issues that were not precisely defined in the Jihādī current and differed from one organization to another. While most Jihādīs in their methodologies considered their group to be one of the Muslim groups and an emirate of Jihād, and that the bayʿah was limited to those duties, the reality was that some of these groups practically behaved as if they were the Muslim community in their country. Some senior figures in the Jihādī current declared their group to be the sole legitimate group in a particular country, and consequently resisted, by various means, the emergence of other groups or the continued existence of previous ones. Some even went as far as seeking fatwas permitting the Jihādī group to unify the ranks of Jihād by force and violence to eliminate other groups! Some deviants were found who issued such fatwas, among those students of knowledge who joined the Jihādī current and took leading roles in issuing fatwas due to the absence of scholars. Some groups also established prisons, punishments, and organizational courts without defining these limits and powers, which created real problems within the organizations. Secrecy and security conditions added an abnormal situation that complicated these matters.

I asked some students of knowledge from the Jihādī current (may Allāh preserve him) about the legitimacy of an individual leaving a group if the path did not suit him or if he saw its futility after joining. He told me it is not permissible unless he sees clear disbelief (kufr bawāḥ) for which he has proof from Allāh!

Consequently, he extended the rights of the supreme Imām to the amīr of the group! When I asked him what if one sees clear futility, clear chaos, or clear bankruptcy, and becomes certain that what he sought by joining that particular group will not achieve his goals? Should he continue like this for his entire life? Is it not permissible for him to switch to another group or strive to form a new one? The man was at a loss for an answer when he considered the dimensions of the problem.

If the group can expel a member from it, why does he not have the right to separate himself and withdraw? And how, in this case, do we resolve the issue of the secrets

he possesses? And so on for these issues.
There were real problems in codifying this and issuing fatwas on it, and in operating on undefined bases.
These are problems not present in the general Muslim community in its natural form. The Commander of the Faithful cannot expel a Muslim from the Muslim community, even if he does not pledge allegiance to him, unless he rebels against him. Nor can an individual member of the Muslim nation withdraw from it. Nor do the rights and duties incumbent upon him by virtue of his general pledge of allegiance and obedience to the Commander of the Faithful equate to those incumbent upon a member of a specific Jihādī or other group.
The problem of the absence of the supreme Imāmate and the demise of the political structure of the Muslim nation opened up many issues. When groups arose to solve this problem and were forced into secrecy due to the regimes' brutality, other insoluble problems emerged. This was one of the manifestations of the Muslim nation's predicament due to the absence of Dār al-Islām, the Imāmate, the Sharīʿah, and their consequences. These problems were some manifestations of the flaws and inadequacy of the proposed methodologies, not only in the Jihādī current but at the level of all Islamic Awakening organizations.

Secondly: Errors and Flaws in the Organizational Structure and Frameworks of the Jihādī Current:

The second type of errors and ailments that appeared in the operational methods of the Jihādī current are flaws and shortcomings in organizational structures and the nature of frameworks. This produced problems, chief among them the major issue whose dimensions became apparent in the last decade of the twentieth century after the launch of the global campaign against terrorism. Reality proved the impossibility of continuing Jihādī work with the existence of this structural problem, which is that

all Jihādī organizations and groups built their structures on the basis that they were (secret - hierarchical - country-specific) organizations.

1. Problems Arising from Secrecy:

Choosing clandestine methods was an obligatory and logical response to tyrannical, oppressive, and unjust powers whose pharaohs and their aides showed no regard for pacts or kinship with believers. I am not here to criticize the principle of secrecy in Islamic work; it is a Sharīʿah principle with its evidence and historical precedents, starting from the Prophetic biography and passing through many experiences throughout Islamic history. Nor am I objecting to it operationally, because it was a compulsory method we practiced during a period of necessity, as is well known. However, I am here to mention the major problems that arose from it due to the nature of things and the shift in the levels of security confrontation to a point where apostate regimes and the global infidel powers behind them became so savage that these problems made continuing with that method a form of insistence on futile failure in the end. These savage methods led to Jihādī groups becoming deeply immersed in secrecy. This generated problems for them in education and preparation, in recruitment and expansion, in the weakness of public outreach and broadening their audience, and in the limited scope of activity for production and contribution.

It is known from the history of the call to Islām since its advent and throughout Muslim history that the methodology of education was primarily based on the relationship between the educator and the followers, which relies on direct contact. This is the primary means of transmitting knowledge and learning, explaining the methodology, presenting an example, demeanor, and behavior, and conveying various areas of influence. Thus was the Messenger of Allāh (peace and blessings be upon him) to the Companions, the Companions to the Tābiʿīn (Successors), and these to their followers among the scholars and inheritors of the prophets, and then

these to their students and their public, down to the common people.
However, clandestine operational methods do not permit this. So, how is cultivation to occur? And if cultivation becomes impossible, how can the work continue with cadres who have not been trained according to the methodology or preparation programs? Clandestine cells rely on the leader of a given cell meeting with his followers to prepare them in the various necessary areas of religious, intellectual, methodological, and political knowledge, as well as military and security training, and so on. This meeting is periodic, often weekly, but becomes less frequent with heightened security tensions, sometimes ceasing altogether. Thus, the initial vanguards of Jihād were prepared to a high standard because they were developed before the phase of covert operations, in mosques or in public or semi-public Islamic groups. Their Jihādī performance was consequently high, commensurate with the levels of cultivation these cadres had received.

However, with the attrition of the first and subsequent generations of cadres – as the path of Jihād consumes its personnel through martyrdom, detention, and emigration from the arena – unqualified cadres and cells join the ranks. These are often from the common people and a younger generation that has typically not been previously cultivated within an Islamic movement. This is especially so since Islamic movements from other schools of thought often immunize their members against joining Jihādī work, because their own leaderships have not entered it.

This tragedy has recurred in all Jihādī experiences. Cadres were quickly depleted, and organizations were forced to rely on new, unqualified personnel, particularly some who proved courageous and effective in combat on the ground. Thus, the group loses its standard and then its identity due to the discontinuation of the cultivation project. This problem and its catastrophic results are sufficient affliction to prove the futility of the entire method. Unfortunately, this was not the only problem.

Security pressures and enforced secrecy also impose conditions that do not allow for widespread recruitment. Most Jihādī groups built themselves and their entities before the confrontation and the outbreak of battle. They formed their structures and recruited most of their members. Then, the confrontation usually began before preparations were complete, either due to intelligence agencies discovering the initial stages of preparation, or due to situations exploding as crises worsened. The Jihādī organization finds itself compelled either to enter the battle and continue preparation and building amidst it, or to be liquidated by security campaigns without resistance. So, they enter the battle. With this entry, the consumption of cadres and members begins. The organization needs recruitment, and recruitment requires propaganda, mobilization, and a popular base. It also needs, to be effective, to monitor potential recruits and study their eligibility and circumstances. However, secrecy and security problems do not permit this, so recruitment weakens, and numbers dwindle. After being fragmented, the organization transforms into disjointed, gang-like cells, gradually consumed by the battle, unless the organization succeeds in developing guerrilla warfare, moving it from one stage to another until recruitment expands. Yet, what happened in all previous experiences, without exception, was that the preparation of Jihādī cadres and members was limited. It did not expand due to many reasons, the most important being the security challenge and the method of secrecy.

For example, the number of active *mujāhidīn* in Syria, the longest attempt (around ten years), did not exceed 1,500 at its peak, not including local supporters. This was in a country with a population of approximately 12 million at the time. In Egypt, the Jihād Organization did not exceed 2,000 members, and the Islamic Group perhaps had double that number of active members, excluding general mosque attendees. This was from a nation that numbered over 60 million people. In Libya, the number of *mujāhidīn* did not surpass a modest figure from a population that was itself

limited, not reaching 4 million. In some countries, like Tunisia, the number did not exceed the dozens, and so on.

As for weak propaganda, a shrinking popular base, and the consequent poor mobilization due to secrecy, this requires little explanation, as clandestine methods do not provide what is necessary for mobilization, which fundamentally relies on connecting with the masses through public means.

2. Problems Arising from Hierarchical Structure and Security Issues

All political and Jihādī Islamic organizations, and similar groups, were built using a hierarchical method. Often, the call begins with a few individuals who define the foundations of their methodology, their objectives, and their program of action. They pledge allegiance to one among them as their leader (emir), forming the initial core of his leadership and consultative council. Thus, the top of the pyramid begins. Recruitment and mobilization operations continue, with each of these individuals becoming responsible for a department, cell, or group, and the system perpetuates. From this collective, what is known as the organizational pyramid is formed.

This method of movement construction possesses strength in terms of control and command, as orders are issued, programs are decided, and they descend from top to bottom. The method is then followed to some extent, and reports, advice, proposals, and so on, return in the opposite direction with flexibility and speed.

However, such a structure is characterized by security weaknesses and a lack of resilience against intelligence and security confrontations. This is especially true after security agencies and tyrannical governments, followed by the disbelieving forces warring against the Jihādī phenomenon, demonstrated their readiness for all forms of brutality, physical and psychological torture, and even the use of drugs and medications to extract information. Consequently, most detainees did not hold back from confessing most or all of the information they possessed, or even adding to it

to satisfy the ravenous wolves among the torturers, eager to extract every shred of information from the depths of the detainee's memory, even from under his fingernails if necessary, or by flaying his skin if that did not suffice.

Thus, in every experience, a few hours were often sufficient to extract a quantity of information that was quickly disseminated to security agencies, widening the circle of arrests. This cycle was repeated again and again, so that security campaigns encompassed the greater part of the clandestine organization within short periods.

The organizational pyramid thus became like an inflated plastic bag containing liquid; puncturing it from any side would lead to its contents emptying, sooner or later. Jihādī organizations that engaged in confrontations attempted to develop their operational methods with something called a linear or cluster structure, where operatives work in separate clusters of cells. However, collectively, these are forced to transform into a collection of organizational pyramids, re-establishing the features of the main pyramid through communication channels.

The problem was not resolved within a single country. This, especially where most countries did not offer rugged geographical terrain allowing organizational leaderships to secure themselves to manage their operations, led to further issues. Even when such terrain was available, they were forced to communicate with active cells that also operated using the same method. Then, Jihādī organizations, like all gangs and secret groups, were compelled to have their leaderships migrate to safe havens in neighboring countries. These havens, by virtue of the old margin of regional conflicts between states, provided them a secure refuge from which they managed their affairs. However, security cooperation, as we previously explained, and its transition from the regional to the international sphere, narrowed and then eliminated these havens. The hierarchical problem remained unsolved amidst operations of brutality, torture, kidnapping, and rendition. This, combined with

other factors, led to the erosion of organizations, ultimately providing all the elements for decline and disintegration.

3. The Problem of Regionalism

Most, if not all, Jihādī organizations and groups forming the Jihādī current that operated during the latter half of the last century were regional in their field of operation and their movement's objectives. This was a result of the prevailing political, social, and practical circumstances before globalization permeated all aspects of human activity, including Jihādī groups themselves.

Few were those countries that possessed a vast area, aided by geographical ruggedness and diversity, in addition to a large population and expansive borders and access points, such that they had the various factors to create the conditions for a Jihādī guerrilla war that could progress through stages to success. The Western colonial partition plans, enacted during what can be considered a new wave of Crusades, fragmented the Islamic and Arab world into entities, most of which were small, incapable, and lacking geographical, human, or economic prerequisites.

However, Jihādī organizations planned their work within the confines of confronting their own particular tyrannical regime, within the context established by Sykes-Picot at the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, most Jihādī organizations found themselves facing realities that did not, in fact, allow for the success of a revolution or the launch of comprehensive guerrilla warfare in most countries. What can a Jihādī organization achieve at the level of Bahrain, Qatar, Tunisia, Jordan, Syria, or Libya, given these regional constraints? Even large countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia were not provided by their national circumstances with sufficient factors for the success of clandestine confrontations by hierarchical organizations within their borders. The final outcome, resulting from the confluence of these

reasons, was commensurate with these realities. All such attempts, without exception, were liquidated over 40 years and through dozens of experiences.

Following these three fundamental problems of structure and framework, there were other structural issues, the most important of which include:

4. The Problem of Non-Field Leadership

As mentioned, the main leaderships of the organizations, the emir and his senior aides, were forced to leave their countries and emigrate under the pressure of security campaigns. They settled in nearby or distant havens, far from the sites of their cause, and dealt with it through messengers or external communications: couriers, telephones, fax machines. This method created vulnerabilities for the organizations and points of penetration for intelligence agencies.

This automatically created active military field commanders, while the external leaderships transformed into political and media leaderships. This reality quickly generated countless problems. I personally witnessed a number of experiences where this issue was at the forefront of what contributed to the ruin of Jihādī causes. The "Jihādī Revolution in Syria," which I experienced from within, was a model of this problem. The political leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood settled in Baghdad, Amman, and neighboring areas of Syria. They began to lay down plans and programs for a political, military, and security reality inside Syria about which they knew very little. Soon, conditions changed, their knowledge of developments diminished, and they began to draw up plans in a vacuum. The field commanders found themselves forced to act and maneuver, but they were constrained by two strong tethers: the pledge of allegiance and the duty to hear and obey the leadership abroad, and the desperate need for the funds sent along with the orders.

I also witnessed a number of Jihādī causes through my interaction with their members and leaders in several Arab countries, and I found they had the same

problem. Those leaderships should have transformed into popular symbols that move the masses and political-media leaders, leaving military action and field decisions to the field commanders. However, they clung to the details of decisions and did not trust young field commanders. In some cases, they were right to do so, but this did not eliminate problems that found no solution and were, by the nature of things, inherent to organizations operating with such methods in such circumstances.

5. The Problem of Funding

Jihādī organizations were limited in number, elitist, and not mass-based in most, if not all, cases. Consequently, their bases or popular support did not provide them with sufficient financial resources. They were forced to resort to external sources, which created significant problems. Ultimately, these resources, from entities not intrinsically committed to these causes, could not meet the needs that ballooned with the launch of operations and the escalating costs of military and security expenses, as well as the needs of the families of martyrs, the pursued, and prisoners, and so forth.

Jihādī organizations relied either on the support of political groups and organizations that were forced into confrontation due to regimes expanding the circle of conflict out of their own stupidity and tyranny (as happened in Syria), or on exploiting a revolution in which young men would die and *mujāhidīn* would be martyred, and which would require ready-made leaderships to assume power, according to dreams of the collapse of those regimes that ultimately did not collapse.

Alternatively, Jihādī organizations relied on the support of some Islamic groups from other countries or some philanthropic individuals who supported Jihād, usually in countries other than their own. This was the case for most benefactors of

Jihādī groups from the primary source for most of these movements: the Gulf Cooperation Council states, especially Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Or, they found themselves forced to accept aid from some governments and regimes with their own special agendas for providing such support.

I do not wish to elaborate on the many problems caused by this situation and by Jihādī groups operating under the banner of "Charity for the sake of Allāh." However, the outcome was that programs to dry up funding sources, and the irregularity of those sources even before these programs were implemented, led the organizations, whose expenses had expanded, to practical bankruptcy. This was one of the primary reasons for failure.

6. The Problem of Consultation (Shūrā), the Absence of Institutionalization, and the Impossibility of Establishing It Amidst Security Challenges

The issue of consultation (shūrā) and the method of decision-making was one of the biggest problems that accompanied the work in most Jihādī organizations. It often led to splits and divisions within organizations and the spread of the phenomenon I have termed "amoebic organizations," which divide and divide, and soon divide again.

Most Jihādī organizations adopted the principle of non-binding consultation, where the emir is authorized to choose what he deems appropriate after reviewing the opinions of his leaders and aides. A few adopted the principle of binding consultation, where the emir is obliged to accept the opinion of the majority of the leadership or consultative council on a given matter. This is a matter whose explanation and delineation of the pros and cons of each method would be lengthy, and this is not the place for expansion and detail. Some Jihādī organizations addressed these issues by making consultation of two types: binding for general and important strategic decisions, and non-binding for the tactics of implementing those

strategies. However, all these classifications and administrative efforts, amidst security storms and the dispersal of Jihādī organization leaderships – either in hideouts within their countries or in various havens in neighboring countries, openly or secretly – meant that everyone eventually went into hiding and moved frequently, making it impossible to practice any form of consultation. The general emir and sub-emirs issued whatever necessary orders were feasible, relying on Allāh in extremely tragic circumstances. Institutions and administrations collapsed and devolved to a few officials responsible for subsidiary matters, acting according to the exigencies of de facto necessities. Work was forcibly reduced to day-to-day management on all levels.

7. The Problem of Weak Internal Security in the Jihādī Current

The principle of operating in clandestine organizations that take the form of gangs using security-conscious methods is a principle and operational model foreign to Arab and Islamic societies. Due to their historical and social components, these societies have operated in ways entirely contrary to the principles of this method, to which we were compelled by repression. Arab and Islamic societies are open societies. Cultivation within them relies on contact with the public, and mobilization relies on oratory, public proclamation of the call, and influencing people. News circulates in our societies through a system of rumor; the love of spreading news is an old social heritage. Public confrontations, duels, encounters, and displays of heroism are likewise historical and cultural legacies. Wasted time, freedom of movement, and a Bedouin culture of spontaneity still characterize our societies despite industrial and urban transformations.

Thus, the methods of concealment, gangs, and secrecy; the modus operandi of mafias; precise appointments and brief meetings; strict, concise orders; and literal execution without expansive independent judgment; punishment for mistakes, even the elimination of troublemakers in the operational system of gangs – all these are

methods that did not find acceptance in our societies. Organizations were unable to prepare more than a very limited number of cadres within their structure to perform according to these methods. General social characteristics and inherited flaws imprinted themselves on the work of these organizations and led to disasters due to the lack of harmony with this approach.

At the forefront of these problems was the lack of security awareness and the impossibility of elevating most active elements and grassroots members to the necessities of this method. I observed that most of the heroic *mujāhidīn*, many of whom I knew, and whose splendid performance I witnessed in open field confrontations and on fronts in Afghanistan, were among the least effective performers when entrusted with clandestine tasks or forced into security-conscious movement after becoming fugitives.

Rumor-mongering, narrating secrets, excessive chatter, imprecision in movement, and disrespect for the security of various communications – movement, telephones, faxes, and later the internet, and so on – were incurable diseases that could not be resolved and destroyed many cells throughout various experiences. I almost became certain that this method does not suit our people, and that we must find for them a method that unleashes their energies according to their capabilities and temperaments, without requiring methods that I have seen few able to work with and adopt.

Thirdly: Mistakes in Operational Methods and Confrontation Management

In mentioning these mistakes, I will rely on enumeration for brevity and because they are clear and do not require much explanation or detail, and Allāh, the Exalted, knows best. Among them are:

1. Inability to develop operational strategies due to the unavailability of the necessary data, for reasons either external or internal, leading to work devolving into a series of daily routines and sometimes haphazard decisions.

2. Opening side battles with segments of the Islamic Awakening schools, unnecessarily embroiling various sectors of the populace and its political or social components. These side battles included doctrinal, creedal, and political problems, and a failure to maintain a unified direction of the battle against the primary enemy, represented by tyrannical governments and their allied external aggressors.

3. Becoming entangled in long-term confrontations with government security agencies, which turned into a war of attrition where both the killer and the killed, the rightful and the wrongful, the just and the unjust, were drawn from the nation's reserves. Governments had no difficulty in throwing the sons of the people from the security and army forces – most of whom were either ignorant or coerced – into this endless battle. Meanwhile, the forces and interests of the external aggressor remained unharmed, indifferent to these battles consuming our sons for long years. Thus, the game was played on fields defined by the greater enemy, using methods he designed, and in which he achieved his objectives. The Jihādīs exhausted their strength in it to no avail.

4. Failure, in most cases, to identify keys to the conflict and slogans for confrontation around which people could be mobilized against the governments faced by the Jihādīs. The issue was confined to the details of God's sovereignty (ḥākimiyyah) and its slogans. This was a losing battle due to the difficulty of the content being presented, the opposition from scholars

of the authorities, and their success in undermining its fundamental basis, which is proving the disbelief of the ruler and the obligation to rebel against them. They managed to prove to the populations the rulers' Islām and the obligation to obey them, and that we were a group of Kharijites, dogs of Hellfire, corrupters on earth, and criminal rebels. The Jihādīs were generally unable to raise banners highlighting popular, easily understandable keys to the conflict that would arouse public support. There were very important issues around which the populations could have been mobilized to support the Jihādīs, such as problems of hunger and injustice, squandered dignity, the occupation of holy sites, colonial plunder, and political and economic occupation. These and other slogans were skillfully exploited by nationalists, pan-Arabists, leftists, and even some schools of the political Awakening, turning them into popular currents. All these are fundamentally legitimate issues from a Sharīʿah perspective and can be presented in an Islamic and Jihādī manner. However, the Jihādīs, especially after the intermingling of intellectual data from the so-called Salafī current into their methodology, chose the one-dimensional presentation of problems related to sovereignty (ḥākimiyyah) and allegiance and disavowal (walāʾ wa-l-barāʾ). These are topics, as I mentioned, that require an elite understanding and are difficult for the common people to digest.

5. The style of discourse of most Jihādīs was not populist. Communication methods were generally limited and underdeveloped, both in type and quantity. Jihādīs relied on leaflets, communiqués, and, in very limited cases, some cassette tapes. Many Jihādī groups had no media message at all. Indeed, many populations in some countries knew nothing about the Jihādīs within them, nor why they were fighting and being martyred, nor what their

objectives were.

Furthermore, the discourse of most of them, especially after mixing with non-Jihādī Salafī thought, was characterized by arrogance and harshness, lacking heart-softening reminders, emotional appeals, and elements that evoke mercy, compassion, and sympathy. They adopted an approach of shunning people and distancing themselves from them in everything, which isolated the Jihādīs and helped media campaigns to paint a repulsive caricature of the Jihādī personality, a portrayal confirmed by the actual practices of many of them.

Fourthly: Other Mistakes, Problems, Obstacles, and Types of Dysfunction in the Operational Method of the Jihādī Current

These too I will mention briefly as bullet points. Due to their variety, I will list them without intentional order. Among them are:

1. The Jihādī current's lack of scholars to lead its course, who could fill the gap in cultivation, religious edicts (fatwā), writing, and guidance, and serve as popular symbols to mobilize the masses. This contributed to the emergence of the phenomenon of the "young muftī," or what they loosely termed "a brother who has knowledge" – a term that could apply to anyone with any knowledge, as no Muslim is without some knowledge.

2. A general decline in the level of religious knowledge within the Jihādī current at all levels. This even led to the formation of Jihādī groups in some countries in later stages by young cadres characterized by extremely modest levels in this fundamental field for an Islamic fundamentalist Jihādī current.

3. A decline in the levels of devotional, behavioral, and moral cultivation among many of the later young men who joined the Jihād. Due to the absence of cultivation programs, regrettable phenomena appeared in some Jihādī groups. Anyone who lived through the first generation of Jihād and whom Allāh decreed should see these types from the later Jihādīs could observe the vast difference.

4. The spread of general ignorance across various fields of knowledge, in addition to human ignorance and low levels of behavioral cultivation. Many who later joined Jihādī groups were characterized by superficiality and ignorance of political, security, and scientific realities, and most aspects of contemporary developments. Indeed, the modest or even poor levels that characterized many of the common young men who joined the Jihād extended to become the condition of some who assumed leadership and administrative roles in some nascent Jihādī groups at the end of the twentieth century.

5. The restriction of cultivation and preparation curricula on open fronts and fields like Afghanistan in both phases to almost purely military training programs. Programs for religious scholarly preparation, political guidance, intellectual qualification, and behavioral cultivation were absent from these curricula, despite the availability of favorable conditions such as sanctuary, security, and material resources. The majority adopted "Janissary-style training" and a "cannon culture" in the Ottoman style. This method, and those who supervised it, contributed to cultivating ignorance and producing individuals who did not belong to the Jihādī current we knew two decades earlier, except in emotion, enthusiasm, and sincerity – virtues whose positive outcomes were largely negated by these deficiencies.

6. The emergence of the phenomenon of excessive adherence and extremism in the later stages of the Jihādī current, after the mid-nineties. General conditions – pursuits, oppression, suppression, injustice, the ailments of the Islamic Awakening, the tribulation of palace scholars, the tyranny of governments, invasions by external enemies, and the calamities befalling the Ummah, along with most of its people turning away from their religion – led to reactions that imbued many Jihādī grassroots with fanaticism, a love for extremism and excessive adherence, expressing religiosity through extremism, and commitment through violence and extremism in the simplest rulings and matters. Some veteran Jihādīs and I, after Allāh decreed that we see some of these later models, observed that the gap between these models and the societies from which they had detached themselves had become so vast that they were fit only to fight these societies, and could not find any common ground with the components of the vast majority of the peoples of our lands.

7. The spread of a "yes-man" spirit and a decline in levels of creativity. The emergence of the phenomenon of active elitist management in every group, with the rest becoming followers separated by a large gap in capabilities and qualifications from the limited elite in the inner circle of some Jihādī groups.

8. A decline in the spirit of enjoining good and forbidding evil, a scarcity of purposeful self-criticism, and a diminished ability to rectify defects within Jihādī groups except in a very limited circle. The absence of achieving consultation in general circles, and its confinement to the elite in most groups, contrary to how it was in the Prophetic Sunnah and the methodology of the righteous predecessors.

9. The spread of the phenomenon of the "Jihādī on his own terms" among later Jihādīs. This is one of the effects of the "they were men, and we are men" approach, especially in Afghanistan in both its phases: no school of thought, no group, no emir, no methodology, no controls; absolutely free, unaffiliated, a rebel who cannot be controlled, and has no point of reference.

10. The spread of the phenomenon of "Jihādīs who have not engaged in Jihād," yet who came to the fore as symbols, guides, and muftīs for Jihādīs. This appeared among followers and supporters of the Jihādī current who were very fanatical about its methodology and symbols in words, but did not actually engage in Jihād, especially among Awakening circles in Western countries, and other circles.

11. The spread of the phenomenon of those who wanted preparation but did not want to go forth for Jihād, contrary to those who, if they had wanted to go forth, would have prepared for it. But these prepared and did not go forth. Thousands of trainees were of no benefit; their fate after receiving advanced training is unknown. The reason is that they were trained, but those who trained them did not cultivate them nor instill in them any combat doctrine.

12. Working for the benefit of others in issues of intersecting international and regional interests, and the inability of interim leaderships to create an autonomous project, as happened in the first Afghanistan experience and the Bosnia experience.

13. Forgetting the prisoners: This is one of the catastrophes of the Jihādī current. Prisoners accumulated by the thousands in the prisons of tyrants, among them scholars, preachers, senior Islamists, Jihādī leaders, and their best

cadres. Then, hundreds of prisoners also accumulated in the prisons of America and Western countries. Yet, the Jihādī current showed no movement towards carrying out operations aimed at their release, as if they were completely forgotten.

14. Loss of the ability to "deter" various kinds of enemies, to the point where we became the ones instilled with fear, even though they call us terrorists.

And so on.

An important historical phase of one of the most significant schools of the Islamic Awakening, and one of the most impactful on the reality of Muslims, has concluded. This is the school of the Jihādī current, whose experiences and contributions spanned approximately four decades. In these two chapters, the sixth and seventh, I have attempted to record a summary of its trajectory and characteristics, and the lessons from its experiences. I presented a summary of its positive harvest and great achievements, as well as the internal and external reasons that led to the failure of those attempts to achieve their ultimate goals, by the decree of Allāh.

With the conclusion of this chapter, the first part of this book ends. It has dealt with the roots of the events we are experiencing, and a summary of this Ummah's history of conflict with the Romans – this Ummah's eternal affliction and ordeal.

It also presented a summary of the course of its Islamic and Jihādī awakening, and the experiences and lessons it abounded with, which must be known and whose lessons must be drawn upon as we enter the twenty-first century and step into the post-September world – the world of the great Zionist-Crusader campaigns against our vast Islamic world.

This century, which they want to be American-Zionist, where "nations have conspired against us as diners conspire over a bowl of food," just as the truthful, confirmed Prophet (peace be upon him) informed us.

This century, we must inaugurate by launching global Islamic resistance against this aggressor targeting our religion, holy sites, lives, honor, property, and all the foundations of our existence as a Muslim nation.

This resistance cannot proceed with guidance and insight without knowledge of the roots of this conflict, its history, and its experiences, for which the preceding chapters were written to fill some of its gaps.

This resistance, which must be launched on foundations of guidance, insight, and integrated principles, building upon past lessons and morals, and proceeding according to a methodology and methods suitable for the current stage, in light of the constants of this religion and the combative Jihādī creed of this Ummah, and the foundations of a disciplined movement methodology appropriate for the new calamities and circumstances that have befallen us.

This is what I will attempt to lay some groundwork for in the next part of this book. And Allāh is the Giver of success, and He [is the one who] guides to the right path.